

A
PILGRIMAGE INTO DAUPHINE.

VOL. I.

A

PILGRIMAGE INTO DAUPHINÉ;

COMPRISING A VISIT TO THE MONASTERY OF

THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE;

WITH ANECDOTES, INCIDENTS, AND SKETCHES FROM

TWENTY DEPARTMENTS OF FRANCE.

BY THE REV. GEORGE M^r MUSGRAVE, M.A.

AUTHOR OF "A RAMBLE THROUGH NORMANDY," &c.

"He travels and expatiates: As the bee
From flow'r to flow'r, so he from land to land:
The manners, customs, policy, of all
Pay contribution to the store he gleans;
He sucks intelligence in ev'ry clime,
And spreads the honey of his deep research
At his return: — a rich repast for me!
He travels, and I too."—COWPER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO
THE REVEREND
JOHN LOUIS PETIT, M.A. F.S.A.
THROUGH WHOSE MASTERLY PUBLICATIONS
THE GENERAL SCOPE OF ANTIQUARIAN KNOWLEDGE
HAS BEEN ENLARGED,
THE STUDY OF ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER PROMOTED,
AND THE ADVANTAGES OF CONTINENTAL TRAVEL
MOST PLEASURABLY ENHANCED;
THE FOLLOWING NARRATIVE
OF
A SKETCHING EXCURSION,
THROUGH SOME OF THE FAIREST PROVINCES
OF
BEAUTIFUL FRANCE,
IS INSCRIBED AND DEDICATED
BY
HIS BROTHER ARTIST AND ARCHÆOLOGIST
THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E .

THE arrival of the Emperor and Empress of the French in England, and the return visit of the Queen of these realms to Paris, and its Exhibition in 1855, attracting thousands of her subjects to that great sight, in one and the same year, cannot have been wholly uninfluential in directing our countrymen's attention towards France; and in creating that interest in its productions and resources, its scenery and people, which stimulates more extensive inquiry, and persuades untravelled men to explore that fine kingdom's territories.

No one could behold, as the author of the following pages beheld, the young heir to the British Crown riding by the side of Louis Napoleon, in his open carriage, through a double line of five hundred thousand delighted spectators, unescorted by a single equerry or dragoon, unaccompanied by any member of the English or French Court, but enjoying the unrestrained sociability of that

entente cordiale which, by Divine blessing, has blended the two mighty nations in one mind and heart, without feeling that they have but too long lived in strange unacquaintance with each others' homes, and the lands they live in. In those homes, and in the provinces through which they are scattered, we can alone learn the real dispositions and manners of a people whose alliance has proved an arm of strength to us in war; and whose friendship must ever enhance, while it tends to ensure, the most valuable enjoyments of peace.

Under the influence of such convictions the journey was taken which furnished subject matter for these volumes.

In deviating frequently from the beaten tracks, many a rough way and impediment had to be surmounted, and some toil of unusual fatigue endured; but the means of extending our personal knowledge of the remotest localities, the most valuable products, and the most beautiful features in the Departments of France are becoming more and more enlarged; and the period is not remote which will bring the most attractive of all these within the range of a very short Summer excursion.

Information, therefore, calculated to befriend such projects in connection with intellectual diversion will not be altogether valueless matter for fireside reading at the present season; and if these reports of characters worth studying, and of scenery and subjects well requiting the mind's attention, shall appear to meet the spirit and to consult the inclinations of this age of energy and investigation, I

trust my readers' awakened interest will kindly welcome the varied narrative here set before them with a concurrence that shall approve the single motive of its publication, and with every indulgence for the shortcomings of a simple and unpretending performance.

G. M.

WITHECOMBE RALEGH :

S. DEVON.

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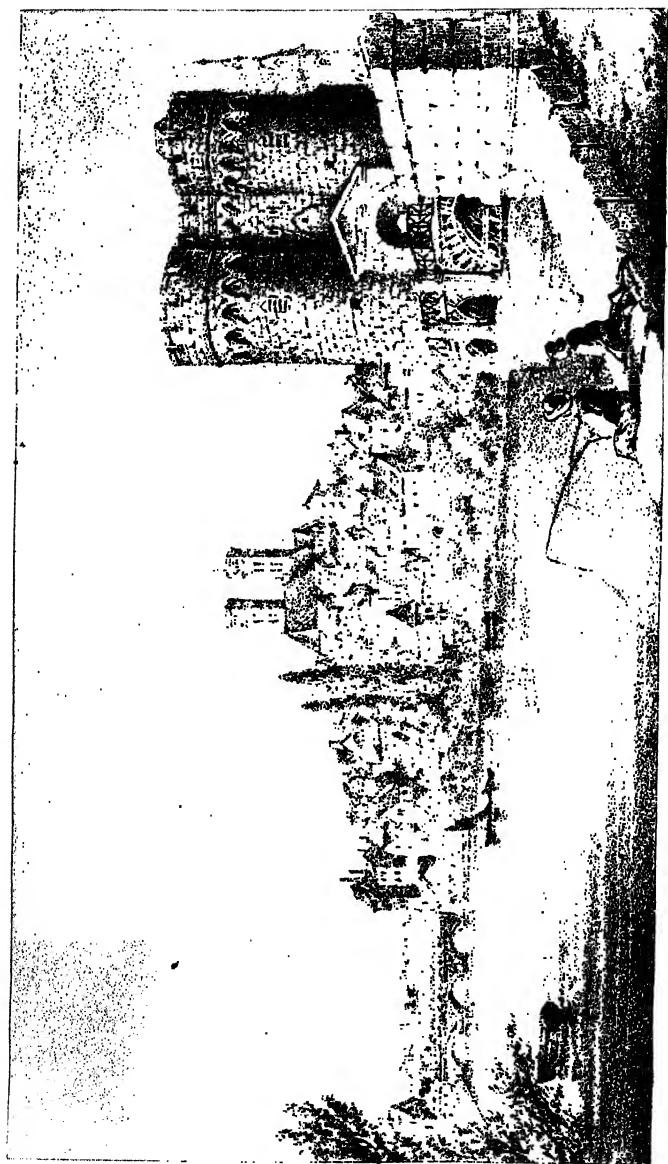
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AMIDST the litter and confusion of a very untidy library-table, upon which the sunbeams of one of the finest days of June, 1855, were shedding lustre and cheerfulness, lay Bradshaw's Map of the Railways in Central Europe;—the most powerful incentive, perhaps, to enterprise and enquiry that could fall in the way of a travelled man on the eve of the Long Vacation. The dark tracks of 'lines opened and travelled upon,' meander through states and territories too numerous to admit of designation by name; and these are

marked on the broad chart with numbers only ; while the finer threads, indicating the ‘connection of the principal highways with the post-roads,’ guide the inquisitive reader of the said document through a labyrinth of provinces and departments, from his native home to the remotest haven or hotel of Piedmont or Holstein, France or Hungary ; so as to convince him, at a glance, that where there is a *will*, there shall be found a *way*, to accomplish the best of summer excursions, and visit some of the fairest spots on the face of the earth, in less time than was occupied, a century since, in a journey from London to Edinburgh, and back again.

I am not offering an apology for the peregrinations of the tourist, whose notes have now, for the third time, supplied subject matter for a volume. Some men may adduce the most sacred reasons for seeking change of scene and climate ; but I entertain the general opinion that those who enjoy leisure, opportunity, and health, and some few of the principal qualifications essential to foreign travel, do well to go forth and return laden to the hive where useful and entertaining information may be elaborated for the use of the home-keeping and reading community who possess not such advantages ; and, at the present period of our free range through the wide continent of Europe, there is not a country in the world which will so richly repay the cultivation of more intimate acquaintance as the highly enlightened regions to which the following pages bear reference ;—scenes to which History, intermingling the records of the two greatest nations of the universe, has attached imperishable interest ; and communities of men, whose aspirations to excellence, and whose

triumphs in the advancement of high civilization, demand our homage and deserve our ever increasing respect. All these considerations are enhanced by the recent interchange of National hospitality, drawing closer and closer the ties of goodwill towards a people whose friendship seems to furnish the best guarantee for tranquillity in the political world, and is likely to prove as beneficial to the general interests of humanity, as their former animosity was baneful. We are naturally interested in the permanence of such a disposition; and this must therefore be regarded as the natural state of the two countries. *Esto perpetua!* for, while it lasts, (as God grant it may), our way in France will be that of pleasantness, and all our paths be peace. I am old enough to remember the days of 'The Occupation,' and a very different condition of things and feelings; and have learned the more duly to appreciate the blessings of such changes for the better; and holding the opinion that we should live and learn to the last, and that the wisest among us may always find in a well-formed *plan-de-route* ample matter for observation and profitable reflection, I determined, though almost a sexagenarian, to go forth once more in the capacity of a student—

“ My thoughts and wishes bent again towards France ”—

and, with the usual means and appliances for scribbling and sketching, left Exmouth, in South Devon, for the Pas de Calais, on July 5th, 1855, before the hot weather had set in, or the holiday making excursionists had set out: no superfluous precaution for one who wishes to take things coolly.

The journey hence to Folkestone has long been practic-

able through Reading, from which a branch is given off from the Great Western Trunk line to Red Hill, in Surrey, and thence to the Kentish coast. It is a long transit, requiring fourteen hours ; but time and money are saved by not proceeding *viâ* London ; and the halt of upwards of two hours at Reading makes an agreeable break in the day's travelling, and enables the observant tourist to take a leisurely survey of the remains of the old Abbey, founded in A.D. 1121, by Henry I., for two hundred monks of the Benedictine order. The king died in Normandy, and was subsequently buried with much magnificence before the high altar in the church of this monastery. The most perfect part of the original building is the gateway on the South of Forbury Hill. This was the principal entrance of the Abbey, the walls of which enclosed a space of three quarters of a mile in circumference ; and among the massive ruins of the church erected in this religious house, wherein Thomas-à-Becket had solemnized mass, and Henry II. knelt in prayer, I found the drill-sergeant of the Berkshire Militia giving instruction on march and counter-march to the young recruits recently enrolled as musicians for the regimental band. Nearly seven hundred years had fled since the doomed archbishop consecrated this very spot, on which, during four centuries, and under thirty-one abbots, the fortunes of the holy brotherhood flourished in uninterrupted prosperity and splendour ; but, even now, enough remains of the nave and transept to recall the memory of those eventful times and illustrious men ; and the tones of the energetic subaltern's word of command, and the tramp of his remarkably awkward squad, impressed me with a consciousness of most grievous desecration. In

lieu of "Dominus vobiscum," or "Sursum corda," I sat and listened to the phraseology of "The Facings:"—"Bring the right foot smartly back in a line with the left; and place the right heel against the ball of the left toe, keeping the shoulders square to the front! What are ye after now? Let your 'jyntes' be all loose, and your limbs more 'lissom!' Don't be swinging your fists right and left, like a sojer in fits! You'll be knocking men down with your 'hinstruments' in that cubbish style o' march!"

Base uses and abuses, these! for that sanctuary where mitres, crosiers, and diadems were once familiar as the noon-day light; and kings of the realm were proud to fill the niche appropriated to each nursing father!

At Reigate I fell in with a numerous company of gentler blood; aspirants, also, to military renown:—some twenty youths just emerged from the Examination Board of Sandhurst College. There was a mingled din, upon the station platform, of grumbling and exultation—a comparison of notes, and each individual's account of his sensations while under torture. One had barely scraped through with his Latin. Another confessed to having broken down bodily in his Algebra. The tall, thin young man with sandy hair, had got "*kudos*" (credit) for his field fortifications, but his history was "*very* shady indeed," and "old Chepmell" had nearly done for him. Another had been fairly plucked for his chronology, and given up such dates as rendered his chance of passing quite hopeless. One of the rejected would have taken it very kindly at my hand if I would but work out the simple equation which had floored him; and another was outraged at having been

expected to know why Epaminondas had been degraded to the ranks ! Four of the party outdid, between them, the rattle of the railway carriage wheels, when we set off for Tonbridge, as they discussed the *rationale* and equity, or unfairness, of the dread ordeal, and set my imagination to work in attempting to conceive what possible use might be made of the several points of knowledge thus forced upon my notice, when these youngsters should find themselves engaged in the landing of forage or accoutrements, the night work in the trenches, the hutting of their men, the provisioning of a company, and the organization in general of military force, in the presence of the enemy at Sebastopol ! Now that they are all come home from "the wars," they are probably in a position to solve such natural queries.

I crossed from Folkestone to Boulogne in the afternoon of the next day. A few deranged stomachs succumbed to the influence of a light ground swell, which no lemon juice, creosote, or Cognac could counteract ; but the passage was for the most part pleasurable. My old friend, Colonel A——, of the Grenadier Guards, chatted away on times past and present, through the two hours of transit ; and, at sight of an interesting, but suffering, couple on the port gunwhale, we agreed in thinking it was an error in judgment for a newly-wedded pair to begin matrimonial life in a state of nausea. "To cherish" one's better half "in sickness" *on shipboard* is often impossible. Thus, an infraction of the recent vow made in holy church is the earliest occurrence in the honeymoon ; and the helpmates, tormented dolefully in the *flesh*, are found mutually wanting in the hour of greatest need ; however willing may

be the *spirit* to "obey," and to "serve," to love and to honour each other, so long as they both shall live !

As a matter of course, we found the Boulonnais on the *qui vive* of questioning and curiosity as to the promised guests from Osborne. "It is not your Victoria," said they, "who is about to visit Louis Napoleon ; but it is England about to occupy a seat at every hearth, and find entry into every heart in France !" This was a grandiloquent welcome, and reception on a vast scale, indeed ; and I surmise very few of us who remained in the country failed eventually to understand the extensiveness of the idea, and the influence of its full operation, when beds, nay, sofas and "shake downs," were not procurable for love or money ; and the "Rosbif" of old Gaul realized twenty pence a pound ! But the harbour authorities were meditating great things ; and the reception about to be given in August to our Sovereign Lady the Queen would surpass, it was said, all former displays of the pride, pomp, and circumstance of loyalty and state splendour. The result justified this announcement ; for nothing was wanting, when the hour was come, that could testify the kindest of motives, the sincerest expression of national good-will, or the heartiest impulses of individual gratification.

Doubtless, most of my readers are as familiar with old Boulogne as with modern Brighton ; yet I question whether many of them have enjoyed a stroll at night-fall on the cliff Eastward of the port, overlooking the whole town and harbour, the Western coast and the Dover Straits. The narrow streets and lanes, through which, alone, this lofty eminence is accessible, lead off from the quay into a precipitous ascent which craves stout legs, a strong

stomach, and wary walking ; “ a very ancient and fish-like smell ” pervades the whole locality which is exclusively tenanted by the fishermen and the fisherwomen, whose general features, legs, and costume have so often supplied sketches to the draughtsman, and subjects to the modeller.

These amphibious daughters of Picardy and Artois have neither fine forms nor pleasing physiognomy ; but as they wear neither shoe nor stocking, nor any garment below knee, and occupy their business in the water, sand, and mud along shore, in search of shrimps, cockles and periwinkles, their legs and feet are, with rare exceptions, of most beautiful mould ; and their toes lie level, even, and delicately fair, as ladies’ fingers—(I do not mean the cakes so called !) or like those of the yet uncompressed feet of infants. Their work-a-day dress is a coarse brown or blue serge surtout or tunic, under which is a flannel shirt. In summer they wear a broad straw hat ; in autumn and winter a “ Southwester,” or tarpaulin head-piece. I need hardly mention their ear-rings, in which, like the women who retail fish in the market, they appear on Sundays and fête-days ; for these are objects of continual request and purchase among our young ladies visiting the town ; but the habiliments of these poor devoted wives and daughters, when their piscatory trim is laid aside, are of no ordinary toilette ; and the exclusiveness of their *esprit de corps* is not exceeded by the prescriptions and punctilio of Scotch clanship. They consider every marriage a *mésalliance*, which is not contracted with the *Pêcheur* portion of the population ; and, like the “ great woman ” of Shunem, “ dwell ” preferably among their “ own people.” I was not a little interested as I passed by, and beheld their

evening devotions, meals and manners. Seven elderly matrons, who had been telling their beads on the bare pavement of Saint Peter's Church when I first entered it, were afterwards found by me squatted on their hams, Turk fashion, in the gutter, discussing over their basins full of beans, the feasibility of ever making the long overhanging net, which almost touched their heads, fit for further use at sea. Out of the uppermost window of every fourth house in this quarter is projected a pole, either an old mast or oar, from which are suspended, for the purpose of drying, the nets of the occupiers of the premises. They can only hang out sections, in turn; the whole drag being of many hundred yards' length; but, by degrees, the process is completed. Meanwhile, the narrow street is absolutely darkened by this multiplied meshy tackle, under which the tenants of the several houses pass and repass regardless of the swinging mass of briny thread that meets them at every other door. I suppose the old crones I saw supping in the kennel had long since adopted that "pleasant seat" as an undisturbed and independent station; for, like the sailor's wife immortalized by Shakspeare's witches, they "munch'd and munch'd and munch'd" with a complacency quite enviable; and, but for the enormous rent and damage sustained by the net over their heads, for the speedy reparation of which I ascertained them to be holding council over their greasy lentils, (with faint hope of ever "making a job of it,") their evening repast must have known no detriment or alloy. Just as I was quitting this very singular group, I heard a shrill scream of unmistakeable fractiousness from a female child of about three years of age, who was rushing towards me

from the clutches of a rough, robust and very nautical looking *bonne* or nurse, the charitable intent of whose pursuit was simply to put the little urchin to bed ; it being now half-past nine o'clock. Jeanneton caught her juvenile runaway in fine style, and, in an admirable matter of fact *insouciance*, began the act of disrobing in the open street ; but young France was "ready to die, but not to yield ;" and, after being divested of frock and slip, bolted across the pavement with nothing but a scanty shift to avert catching "death 'a cold ;" and left the guardian of her infant days at twenty yards' distance, before she could give tongue or chase ; and there the little shivering rebel stood, as at bay, intent upon another run, and looking as vicious as a cat-a-mountain. The good wives of this *Faubourg Poissonnière*, seemed to think it a good "dodge : " especially when Jeanneton, all aghast, shouted out, "*Veux tu, donc, te coucher sur le pavé ?*"* and

"The pretty wretch left crying, and said 'ay.' "†

ROMEO AND JULIET.

After long climbing, I gained the summit of the cliff, and

— "thence we look'd towards England."

Quite *à-propos* to such a glance, I presently found myself at the open-work'd iron gate entry of a high walled enclosure, at one angle of which stood a sort of observatory, with residence rooms attached ; and which, by the inscription outside, I ascertained to be the "*Poste d'observation de l'Empereur Napoléon :*" the enclosure itself

* "Do you mean to sleep in the open street to-night ?"

† Query, "Oui" [*Printer's D*——.]

being designated as the "*Enclos de la baraque de l'Empereur et de l'Amiral.*"*

This was, in fact, the look-out station of their Imperial commander, during the encampment, in 1801, of the French army that was to invade England; and here, no doubt, the poor admiral *enjoyed* a full view of Lord Nelson's flagship, the "Medusa" frigate, when he sank two floating batteries, and destroyed such gun-boats as lay within range outside the harbour, during his *reconnoitre* of the town. I remember Lord Keith's attempt, three years afterwards, to burn the flotilla; and heard on the Kentish coast, the firing of guns from those very heights whereon I was at this moment ruminating.

One would have supposed our gallant allies would, by this time, have judiciously effaced every record of the insane project in aid of which this observatory was erected; but, as dusk drew on, I peeped through the iron gates, and saw at the entry a little square plot of gravel, on which was raised, as in relievo, a vast letter N, composed of green grass turf, eight inches thick, and eight feet long from the top to the bottom of each portion. Beyond the head of this initial stood two short slender masts, employed, I presume, on fête days, to carry the flags of France and of the Emperor; and there and thus, from the beginning of the present century, though the *word* of his threatening fell to the ground—

"*Littera scripta manet.*"†

* Wonders never cease. On the 14th of June, 1856, a statue of Napoleon I. was erected on this very spot, with reference to the triumphant alliance of France and England!

† The written letter [of the alphabet] remains.—*Translation.*

Here, we are told, Caligula, pre-eminent among Rome's most detestable Emperors, seventeen hundred and sixty-four years before, when meditating a descent on Britain, began to construct a military road ; and built a lighthouse centrally situate in the line of wall of which massive fragments still remain. They built not for a day but for all time, these ancient Romans :—I paced the sides of one of the towers and found it nearly twelve yards square. It had evidently always been solid, and I traced steps ascending to its summit or platform, from the level ground below ; but I conceive the masonry must have been built up six feet in thickness around a knoll of rising ground, and so have imparted this appearance of stupendous strength and durability ; for it is difficult to conceive the use of a solid structure of six and thirty feet square, in an age when artillery was unknown, and on a spot wholly inaccessible by engine or enemy on the coast side. Within a few paces of this “tower of other days” was the palisade erected upwards of fifty years since by Napoleon I. at the outposts of the camp inclosing his army of Invasion ; and here I fell in with a sentinel who informed me that this was the boundary of the present encampment. An hour's walk would take me into the head-quarters of twenty thousand soldiers of France ; the gallant fellows among whom I spent a whole day in the summer of 1854. I heard the hum of the distant army, the call notes of their bugles, and the chorusses of their songs, “and felt no harm ;” but, in the grave retrospect of fifty years, I thought “if the Lord had not been on our side when men rose up against us,” in the day of threatened descent upon the opposite shore, how brief might have been the interval

between Invasion and "Lamentation, Mourning, and Woe;" how deadly the encounter with an island people whose sword would never have been sheathed till every enemy had been driven back into the sea. I heard the Bourdon bell of St. Nicholas, and the booming report of a ship gun in the offing, as the constellation of the Pleiades arose in the North-east, marking the locality of my garden at the foot of Marpool hill, and the resting place of those far away—and felt the full force of those well known lines—

"Soft hour which wakes the wish and melts the heart
Of those who sail the seas, on the first day
When they from their sweet home are torn apart,
And fills with love the traveller on his way,
As the far distant gun-fire makes him start,
That knells the parting of another day."

Moon and stars, lamps and tapers, began, far and near, to furnish natural and artificial illumination. Calais uplifted her revolving lights, Cape Grisnez its red lens, and the stream beacon blazed in brightness. In the town below were thousands of glimmering candles and jets of night-dispersing gas evolved from our Welsh and Newcastle coals which do good service, in summer and winter, to the thirty-two thousand inhabitants of this vast seaport—nearly one-fourth of whom are English; an infusion which, in spite of the systematic and studied economy of our colonizing countrymen, has, since the close of the long war, in 1815, enriched the town exceedingly beyond every other in the empire, and initiated the natives in many a principle of domestic comfort, decency, and decorum unknown to France at large; but unappreciable, for the

most part, by a people whose habits exhibit absolutely nothing in common with ours. There has been a wide, and, we may add, a politic adaptation here to the usages and demands of British taste; and the compensation has proved proportionate. *On s'entend bien!* We maintain a perfectly good understanding; though house rent is double of what it was at the restoration of the Bourbons; and provisions and wages are fifty per cent. higher; but the great *prestige* of Boulogne is its close proximity to our coast; its resources for the education of children, and its various arrangements for sea-bathing, which are excellent.

There appears to have been established, for nearly forty years past, a regular staff of experienced and able teachers in this town, at whose hands the young members of English families receive tuition in languages and elegant accomplishments at one half (occasionally, even less) of the expense of such instruction in England; and this is a sacred justification of residence in a foreign home so near to the old country, on the part of those who can *bonâ-fide* plead it. But over and above this, as regards another and distinct class of settled residents, is the facility of maintaining a certain degree of incognito, a "walk invisible," in that narrow path of rigid economy and self-denial which, either from false pride, or from "uncontrollable force of circumstances," parties *will* not [I do not say, *cannot*] adhere to in their own country, where their views of what is, with too little sense, termed the *maintenance of a certain position*, are miserably thwarted by deficiency of ways and means: an undeniable evil, certainly;—but a question arises whether migration be not a greater. This doctrine of position is, perhaps, the most pernicious and lamentable

delusion of the present age, involving absurdities of the grossest and wildest folly. The ridiculously erroneous notions entertained upon this point—(one to which random talkers and loose reasoners recur so often and so unmeaningly), and the deplorable mistakes into which the victims of such misconception fall, as they assume situations they are utterly unqualified to fill, and from which it would be mercy to extricate them, as from *a false and painful position*, are only assimilated by comparison with the blind who, thinking to range themselves to advantage in a crowd, where some rude shock or overthrow is to be dreaded every moment, are invariably found standing in the wrong, if not absolutely the very worst, place!

It is a losing game, played, we may say, in common, by the *nouveau riche*, and the ambitious *poor*; and has done only too much to sadden once “merrie England,” where bare competency vies with affluence, and friends grow cool as one *cuts out* the other in vain and worthless rivalry. And who can declare or estimate how much ease and tranquillity, comfort and self-respect, peace and social enjoyment are to this worse than folly sacrificed! The general opinion of the French is, that the expensive habits of the English constrain the settled residence of so many of them (70,000, it is said) on the continent, in combination with the resolve to quit home altogether, rather than practise the stern, undeviating frugality there imposed on them by taxes and high prices, the dictates of fashion, and the demands of society, “which,” say they, “is the most galling tyranny felt by the most free of all people.” I have already shown that this is not the whole secret of Boulogne’s thrift and popularity, though it was revealed long

since in respect of many other French, as well as Flemish and German, towns, before continental prices began to approach those of British markets, and houses ceased to be hired "for a mere nothing." But self-expatriation has few beside negative advantages to speak of—few satisfactory reasons to recommend it, and knows but few enjoyments without drawback and alloy. I speak of it as an evil; and, in fact, the candid admissions of many with whom I have had opportunities of discussing such matters have confirmed my belief, that if our countrymen would only evince the moral courage of carrying out the self-same system *here*, in England, that they maintain *across the water*, they need not subject their sons and daughters to the un-English training of the Pensionnat, nor to any of the very questionable influences of foreign education and intercourse; to say nothing upon the disruption of home ties, separation of kin and acquaintance, and other regretful estrangements resulting from an alternative which moderate views, and discreet and conscientious management, in the Fatherland, would have rendered altogether unnecessary. *Quant à moi*, I have no grounds of quarrel with the Little Britain on the opposite shore; but I hardly feel that I am in France, till I have left Picardy behind me;—so that Boulogne seems, in my regard, little more than an English station on the line to Paris, and is not French enough for my notions on continental men and manners; nor foreign enough to compensate, with interesting novelties, for quitting a comfortable home in England.

It is remarkable that the churches remain open so late. I found upwards of a hundred persons in the Church of St. Nicholas at nine o'clock, and the organ was in full

play. The Mariners' Church, (St. Peter's) built upon the cliff of which I have been speaking, was not closed when I went down into the town at ten o'clock. This facility of ingress, however, is expressly to gratify the sea-faring community whose homes alone surround the sacred edifice, and who dearly regard the privilege of being able to kneel in prayer before the altar, or deposit an *ex-voto* offering (the model, perhaps, or drawing of their boat or ship) an hour or two previous to embarkation. They consider St. Peter as the patron saint of all the fishing fraternities on earth; and, next to the dome of the yet unfinished cathedral, the roof of the *Eglise de St. Pierre* is the most conspicuous object beheld from the offing.

Common sailors in all countries are more or less superstitious: their scruples and prejudices are often exceedingly annoying, and unintentionally offer outrage to the best feelings of our nature. Their insuperable dislike of a corpse on board, and their objections to sailing on a Friday, are equally well-known. Hence it was that the Parisians attributed the unfortunately too late arrival of our Queen in Paris on the 18th of August, to the concession that, in their opinion, she must evidently have made to the demur on board the "*Victoria and Albert*" as to setting out upon the voyage on the Friday; but we cannot too reverentially defer to that faith and fear with which "they who go down to the sea in ships,"—the children of danger—to struggle with the wave, the wind and storm, draw nigh to God, in trusting hope or heartfelt gratitude, and throng these temples, on the sea-girt rock, so specially regarded as their own. That they should not lightly esteem religious obligations and the appeals of the Church

to their devout sense of a superintending Divine Providence is but consistent with the plainest dictates of reason, and the promptings of awakened conscience; for "these men see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep;" and we have but to enter the churches and chapels on the sea coasts of Europe, the walls of which are covered throughout with votive offerings from the sailors, going to or returning from sea, to learn the universal prevalence of this pious feeling, and the influence of a faith which, with all its errors, strives, and not unsuccessfully, to keep the heart of many a way-faring, frail, and imperilled fellow-creature in its right place before God.

In a sea-port sending forth upwards of thirteen hundred boats throughout the year, the produce of whose labour maintains a tribe of eight thousand souls, these reflections seem to be urged upon the mind by all and everything that meets the eye or ear in so remarkable a locality; and I can assure even "The *unsentimental Traveller*" that he would find no little store of hard and substantial fact for enquiry and illustration, by day or by night, in the *Mariners' Home* at Boulogne.

CHAPTER II.

Preparations in Paris for the welcome of the Queen of England—Hotel-keepers' arrangements and speculations—French waiter's notion on the "bad habits" of the English—Hot water—The Great Exhibition—A frigate Restaurant—The Palais de l'Industrie—The Annexe—Machinery : Models : World-wide variety of produce—Startling scarcity of visitants, except on Sundays—Influences of such exhibitions.

As might have been expected, Paris was in a state of what is expressively termed "painful excitement;" and the busy note of preparation resounded on every side, from the Great Northern Railway *embarcadère* (whence a branch was being most gallantly constructed to convey our Sovereign into the Strasbourg Station, for the more advantageous *entrée* and *premier coup-d'œil* of the capital,) to the remotest purlieus of the mighty city unapproachable by royalty or its retinue. Saws and hammers, ladders and paint-brushes, even though six weeks must elapse before the entry of Queen Victoria, were already in active requisition; and commissions of infinite variety addressed to every craft and guild of manufacturing Industry, enforcing almost impracticable despatch, flew to and fro throughout the empire,

till every loom from Lyons to Tournai, every *menuisier*, or *fabricant*, within the circle of productive France, began to feel the vibration which agitated head-quarters, and shared the impulse of the Parisians' ambition to achieve a crowning success. The outfitters worked against time, and were hard-pressed, indeed, as the crisis approached; and I can testify to having seen the silk in the loom at Lyons, which, but a week afterwards was hanging in the Royal guest's bed-chamber at St. Cloud. Every one seemed to arrogate to himself the compliment of a personal visit from our Queen; and this was unquestionably the keenest gratification experienced by the people. This self-gratulation prompted the unprecedented outlay of gold and silver money, as the eventful day drew nigh, on house-fronts hired for £150 sterling; on balconies and small terraces fitted with chairs at ten shillings each; on scaffold seats, bedizened with red draperies, at five shillings, down to the humble thirty-six gallon cask set up on end at sixpence! The majority of these "coignes of vantage" were thus lavishly secured by the French: in but few instances by the English: and when, after this cruel expence and six sultry hours' waiting, the royal *cortège* entered *in the dark*, the mortification was blended with too many feelings of indignant discontent to raise that shout of welcome which the general mind had anticipated; and the pageant that was to have astonished a world lives now in memory as *une pièce tombée*. We were told it could not be helped; but, as Yorick said, "They manage these things better in France."

The hotel-keepers "improved upon the occasion," and evincing more than their ordinary faculties of self-possession and daring, tripled their rate of charge for beds and

sitting-rooms ; and, sending away twenty applicants daily, rejoiced in their human harvest, and garnered up gold like chaff. I have not forgotten a charge of four shillings and sixpence for the occupation of a bed in the laundry, in a hotel I had frequented for nearly forty years ; and where, in this instance, I was given to understand, a very special mark of honour had been bestowed on me ! Many hundreds of the humbler classes of provincial folk bivouacked nightly in the least frequented squares and boulevards ; and ate their meals and lay unmolested among the crates and hampers of the markets. Mine host, in the Rue Vivienne, who was not born when I first frequented the hotel, had taken on to his establishment several extra waiters and officials, some of whom were retained (as good linguists) for them accommodation of the English :—some, as being more familiar than the French servants in general with English habits. One of these newly engaged performers, who seemed bent upon proffering me his particular services, took occasion, by the time he had gained with me the landing of the fourth story, to enunciate, with more frankness than deference, his individual opinion on our predilection for “pitchers of hot water.”

“Mauvaise habitude, cela !—mauvaise habitude, cette eau chaude ! Vient Anglais—vient Anglaise ! De l’eau chaude ! même un bain d’eau chaude !”

“Aye,” said I, “we hold that cleanliness is next to godliness :—We have no hydrophobia in our system.”

“Mais, Monsieur ! De l’eau chaude pendant le canicule même !” (Hot water, even in the dog days !)

“Oh ! yes, we consider that we require it then, more than ever.”

"Ah ! quel malheur !"

However, I am anticipating by several weeks, the date of these eventful experiences ; and, indeed, were it not for my desire to follow out the course of my Diary, and contribute here and there a unit of information on some few points which may possibly have been left untouched by contemporary writers appearing at the same period with myself before the reading public, I should have left all mention of Paris, as regards the "Exposition" or the royal visit, to the newspapers, magazines, and "special correspondents;" but, as some readers might have exclaimed, "How extraordinary that this man should have said nothing about Paris, though he was there twice in seven weeks!"—I have ventured to devote a chapter to the substance of such notes as a necessarily hurried visit enabled me to take during the few hours of my stay ; and should any one who peruses such memoranda feel disposed to condense them anew, as an annexation to already acquired particulars, these pages may, at any rate, avail to simplify the means of forming a tolerably fair conception, or of fixing some valuable recollections, of that Exhibition which enchanted the world.

My way to it lay across the Place Louis XV. Being attracted to the river side by the appearance of a small frigate gaily dressed with flags, and lying close to the causeway, I went up to the brink of the quay, and found this vessel moored alongside of the "pay entrance" of that portion of the Exhibition called the "Annexe," or supplementary building. The ship was fitted up as a refreshment gallery, and some small fee was also expected for the privilege of examining the floating battery in all its parts ; with what

success, as a speculation, I did not learn ; but the idea was happy enough ; and the opportunity thus afforded to untravelled Parisians, and inland countryfolks, of seeing a little ship of war *in the Champs Elysées*, from which, at other times, no craft was visible beside charcoal rafts, and an occasional river steam-boat, attracted great numbers of the multitude, whose thirst for *limonade gazeuse* and nautical knowledge might have been satisfied in one and the self-same moment. On the day of my visit, the admission fee to the “Annexe” was a franc. On Sundays, and fête days, this was reduced to two-pence. The resort to this centre of attraction was far from being multitudinous on the intermediate days ; and, on entering the building, I was surprised at the comparative solitude ; a contrast which could not fail to strike the attention of every one who remembered any one day or hour of our Hyde Park Palace’s season. There seemed here, in Paris, (as, indeed, always seemed at first glance of the original Crystal Palace,) to be “something of everything,” as the people say : but, never before had confusion made such a masterpiece ; for the eye, delighted at the abundance of novelties and marvels, dwelt luxuriously on infinite variety, and had nothing to seek. The mighty whole presented at every glance some fresh and engrossing object of attraction ; and the reflection immediately arose, “I must have six months’ leisure for this division alone.” The ingenuity and industry of France were most creditably prominent in all directions, but the devotion of the human mind to Art was nobly evinced by contributions from other continental nations, independently of our own, and displaying (in the Oriental specimens, especially), a culminating point, so to speak, in

excellence of execution and beauty of design, to which even the most eminent genius in our school is yet strange. The Indian collection struck me as being considerably more extensive than it was in Hyde Park; and this department was incessantly thronged by French, German, and Italian visitors enthusiastic in their admiration. However, as I am utterly unable to classify or enumerate a thousandth part of what fell under my notice, and the catalogue (which I did not buy) would be infinitely more worthy of perusal, even if I could, I shall here merely recapitulate what I jotted down, pencil in hand, and tablets opened, as I paced the "Annexe" on the forenoon of July 9th, 1855.

• FULL SIZE

MODELS

Steam-engines for railways and
for manufactories.

Boilers and Retorts.

Hydraulic machinery of every kind.

Forging hammers, anchors, anvils.

Furnaces, flues, ventilators, &c.

Distillery apparatus.

Sugar boiling ditto.

Chymical ditto.

Electrical machines.

Cranes of vast power.

Weighing machines.

Laboratories.

Stoves.

Machinery for washing coarse
and fine linen.

Optical instruments.

Reverberators.

Clocks for large buildings.

Boring apparatus.

Lamps and reflectors for land and
sea.

Of a coal mine, (15 feet high, 20
feet long).

— Bridges and tram-roads,

— Viaducts and arches.

— Churches and tombs.

— Barracks and store-houses.

— Hospitals and ambulances.

— Ships, boats, rafts.

— Manufactories of all kinds.

— Mills of all varieties, (wind
and water),

— Prisons and penitentiaries.

— Government buildings and
royal palaces.

— Forts and redoubts.

— Harbours and quays.

— Ventilators.

— Dockyards and piers, locks,
and canal sluices

— Cemeteries and monuments.

— Telegraphs and steam boats.

FULL SIZE—continued.

Arms and ordnance, armour, etc.
 Mechanical instruments of every variety : locks, safety closets.
 Tools for every craft.
 Wheels in motion, of enormous size : (several of twenty feet diameter).
 Life boats, buoys, signals, etc.
 Gown printing machinery.
 Lace making machinery.
 Coat making machinery.
 Stamping presses.
 Jacquard's loom.
 Looms of all kinds.
 Spinning Jennies.
 Carriages and harness.
 Printing presses of every description.
 Agricultural implements of every description.

MODELS—continued.

Of Railways and cuttings
 — Weigh-bridges.
 — Courts of justice and police stations.
 — Markets of all kinds.
 — Sewers, drains, tiles, etc.
 — Colleges and Lyceums.
 — Steam-boats and screw apparatus.
 — Locomotives and carriages.
 — Pumps, coffer-dams, etc.
 — Farming premises, and implements.
 — Gates, fences, wells, tanks, etc. etc.

Great care seemed to be exercised to prevent the dust settling on the various objects on all sides ; for the removal of which detriment, a certain number of youths, habited in blue blouses, walked up and down, with light feather brooms ; and by these attendants the floor was also watered at periods throughout the day.

In the centre of this floor was a large fountain of most exquisite design, representing a colossal bouquet of flowers encircled by a shallow circular basin, thirty feet in diameter, the water in which was supplied by jets from every flower. These flowers were made of copper, painted with marvellous fidelity to nature ; and the leaves, petals, and stems were

so delicate as to wave in the currents of air produced by the falling water. The water-lilies and bulrushes, all of metal, projecting from the surface below, were of incomparable workmanship; and the effect of the whole was delightful, whether in respect of the design itself, or of the refreshing influences, in a hot summer's day, of so large a quantity of liquid in continual agitation.

As in our own '*omnium gatherum*,' there were also, in this French collection of foreign curiosities, a few trifles on which human ingenuity and patience had laboured to astonish rather than edify the public eye. Among these I observed an elaborately ornamented framework of wood, adorned with white and red paint, carving and gilding, in the form of a Moorish or Saracenic portal, five feet high, and about four feet wide, with the Eagle of Austria introduced at its base, and the name of its fabricator at its summit. The said framework enclosed what seemed, at the distance of three or four yards, to be a picture in crochet work, representing an eruption of Mount Vesuvius, by moonlight. The lava streams were seen descending the sides of the volcano; the column of flame and ashes issuing from the crater. There were a few trees, buildings, boats, and figures along shore; mountains and clouds in the background; moon-beams reflected in the water. The tone of colour was correct and evenly preserved throughout; the yellow and red of "the devouring element" were vivid as Girardo di Notte would have depicted it; and Vanderneer himself could not have expressed moonlight and illuminated water more unmistakeably. Some slight appearance of roughness on the surface led me to doubt its being embroidery or needlework of any kind, and I con-

cluded it was a Mosaic composition, in imitation of some of the bolder style of Roman tablets.

On close inspection, I discovered, to my astonishment, that the whole design was worked up exclusively with 'Lucifer' matches! The inventor, Samuele de Majo of Vienna and of Triesch in Moravia, had used three tints of grey, two of black, three of brown, three of red, two of yellow, and one of white. There would be no difficulty in intermixing these colours in the phosphorated paste with which he must have tipped a million, at least, of matches; and we can readily imagine a correct eye guiding an ingenious workman to the appropriation of every single dot of colour; not only in the scene I have described, but in the decorative frame, whose fluted columns, capitals, plinths, and cornices were all composed, more or less, of the same combustible materials with the main piece. It must have required, however, more than ordinary resolution to pack up such a highly inflammable production, and subject it, through so many hundred miles, to the action of the railway carriages, by which, we may presume, it travelled from Vienna to Paris. One single match might have annihilated the whole fabric in a moment of time. Such alarm, however, is altogether gratuitous, if (and I consider it extremely probable,) the matches were dipped in coloured paste of incombustible ingredients—minus all sulphur, phosphorus, or fulminating powder. Perhaps this was Herr Majo's dummy at Triesch, serving, in various localities, as his travelling advertisement; and he may have considered its introduction on this occasion quite as much in place as the gigantic framework, (at no great distance from his Vesuvius,) thirty-six feet high, in the shape of a

Champagne bottle, into which were packed, in layers, some thousands of bottles, supposed to contain every variety of wine produced in Germany. I observed a large proportion were full of liquor; probably of genuine wine: but many were empty. This was one of the most conspicuous objects in the nave of the "Annexe."

Austria, Prussia, Belgium, and Saxony exhibited numerous machines, and large assortments of cutlery. The chemicals and groceries from Prussia, especially, occupied a very extensive compartment, and indicated with most honourable testimony the energies of scientific and industrial mind, developed more and more by that highly enlightened nation.

I expected to find a vast display of American productions; but the cases were only partially opened.

Great Britain occupied, of course, an immense space. I soon recognised Appold's centrifugal pump in full action. My readers will well remember the noise of its miniature cataract and whirlpool. The French appeared to enjoy this spectacle with no ordinary expression of wonder and approbation.

It was remarkable, likewise, to hear their laudatory comments on our carriages and harness. There are so many admirable specimens of coach-building in Paris, that one would hardly have expected to find our workmanship the object of so high encomium.

Our display of machinery was most brilliant; but I lingered not among our native excellences. I had come to see the foreign wonders; and, unless impelled by the claims of some startling novelty, restricted my survey to these objects, to the neglect of all British productions. Still it

was impossible for an amateur horticulturist to pass over the Edinburgh potato cases. Here were exhibited *two hundred and four* varieties of the potato plant! They were stated to have been raised in the immediate neighbourhood of Edinburgh. One of the sorts, called the "Prince de Rohan," measured twelve inches in girth, and must have exceeded sixteen ounces in weight. I did not, however, recognise that incomparable species, the "Fluke;" a native, I believe, of Lancashire, and somewhat resembling the "lapstone" kidney.

There was also an abundance of colonial produce. In this department the French exhibited a very large variety of interesting objects in various categories, from Algeria. The fruits appeared to be numerous and finely grown. There were a dozen oranges of the dimension of our smaller green-flesh melons; but the object which rivetted my attention, at this point, was a splendid slab, nine feet long and three in width, and about three inches in thickness, of most exquisitely veined translucent onyx; (we might term it agate). The zones were of various hues of brown and white; and the high polish given to the whole mass brought out every minutest streak and tint. It was worthy of a niche in the palace of the Tuileries; and there, in all probability, it will eventually be found.

Jamaica contributed a magnificent collection of woods. Mauritius strewed its fruits; and, where it was impossible to preserve such produce, were admirably coloured drawings representing the fruit in a state of ripeness.

New South Wales and Australia had filled wide spaces, and told eloquently the rate at which the infant states are growing; to say nothing of the temptation here held out to

youthful enterprise and transmarine fortune seekers. A set of casts from the "nuggets," exposed in this compartment, would have become the most persuasive advertisement ever employed for the loading of passenger ships to Sydney and the gold-fields. Shepherd, of Sydney, had sent cases of Champagne wine, made of the true grape cultivated in Australia; and Burgundy was here shown, putting forth the same pretensions.

The cultivation of the vine, however, in Australia, is, as yet, only the pursuit of a few wealthy landowners, who carry it on in the spirit of amateurs, as a branch of horticulture. It is more a fancy than a labour of industry, and has not told with any appreciable effect on the taste or commerce of the colony. It figures prominently in reports, as has here been shown in Paris; but it is all sample, and no bulk. The few wine growers of the colony are satisfied with proving that it can be produced; but Australian wine has not yet found its way into the cellars or ledgers of the trade; which, I think, is much to be regretted, when we consider that Port is becoming scarcer than ever; and genuine Sherry, like a far distanced racer, is "nowhere."

Among other oddities from Victoria colony was a portion of the bark of a tree, on which were painted, in red and black pigment of some kind, several figures purporting to be "men and brethren." These were duly transferred, in copy, to my tablets, as specimens of untutored art which would be libelled by my believing them to be portraits, in *extenso*, of intelligent and lively *apes*; inasmuch as *one* exhibits the "back hair" plaited: I should not, however, have condescended to immortalize, as I thus did, the wild

man's sketches of life and character, but for these personages exhibiting, in every instance, the peculiar feature of a *tail* : a fact so germane to old Lord Monboddo's theory as to provoke a smile at the coincidence, at least, of the baron and the barbarian having entertained the self-same notion of the spine, and of the value of the os-coçcygis as a decoration, whether to man, woman, or monkey, in savage life.

The Cape of Good Hope department covered a broad counter with tin cases of preserved condiments, the labelings of which alone would have stimulated many a squeamish appetite to regale on, at least, a savoury *luncheon*. There were hermetically sealed consignments of Potage Julienne, stewed beef, roast beef, French beans, lettuces in butter, sheeps' kidneys, pears in syrup, fresh peaches, and beef tea ! Constantia wine lay piled in dozens. There were, of course, innumerable objects of interest from the Western and Southern coasts of Africa, contributed direct from the merchants, settlers, and such scientific men as were sensible of the advantages of such communication ; and indirectly through traders and naval officers who had availed themselves of cruise and station to collect specimens of Nature and Art illustrative of that remote region. All these, however, for the most part, appeared in our own Exhibition of 1851.

Leaving the 'Annexe' and its marvellous contents for the chance of another visit, I hastened towards the main building, the "Palais de l'Industrie." The very stairs by which the visitor passed from the secondary to the primary edifice were worthy of all admiration, and might teach our builders how to turn a difficulty to advantage ; our decorators, how to adorn.

But, once arrived in the interior of the "Palais," the mind of the beholder was impressed with the sense of hopelessness as to carrying away a single distinct idea. The amazement awakened by the conglomeration of tens of thousands of master-pieces in every category of Art and Design, became more embarrassing at every turn; and those who were compelled, as I was, to take a rapid survey, and look all around, step by step, in contemplation of the brilliant whole, saw object after object as in a kaleidoscope; without power to take cognizance of details, or even to remember, in any satisfactory degree of accuracy, the features and characteristics of the general effect. The 'Annexe' of itself, indeed, constituted a most glorious demonstration and triumph of national wealth and strength; but when strangers from all parts of Europe passed from this into that solemn hall where the assembled World might have offered homage to the *præsens numen* of French genius, and beheld what had been done, and how well, the all-powerful mind and comprehension of the mighty people whose alliance, at the present moment, we can hardly sufficiently appreciate, were revealed with a force of conviction which was absolutely overpowering; and one could not but feel instantaneously impressed with the sense of their greatness and richly-earned dominion. It was a wonderful scene, that "Palais." The ground-floor on the North side was exclusively appropriated to French manufactures. There stood the costly and beautiful furniture of Tahan: there shone the jewellery and precious-metal caskets of Froment, Rudolph, Lebrun, and numerous other makers of celebrity. The zinc company's works were here displaying marvels beyond conception; the ductile, yet most durable,

metal seeming capable of every imaginable appropriation to the categories of usefulness and ornament. The porcelain of Sèvres, and of the private potteries, were seen in apposition: Our Worcester specimens would lie in *viâ mediâ* between the two degrees of excellence. But, to turn from the Ceramic wheel to the woof upon the loom, what can I say of the silks and velvets of Lyons! I was subsequently informed, on my visit to the principal firms of that interesting metropolis, that their most successful productions had been transmitted to Paris; and there, sure enough, they bade defiance to the world; and if old Jacquard could have soared, while yet in the flesh, into the Empyrean of immortal genius, this department of the fabrics of his native city should have been the scene of his apotheosis.

The reputation of French chemists is world-wide, and could hardly receive accession of celebrity from any evidence on this occasion; but facilities were here furnished for illustrating several recent discoveries in chemistry, of such high scientific interest as would eventually lead to practical results of no light importance. One of the most eminent professors superintended, by frequent personal attendance, this valuable section of the Exhibition in which a larger collection of novelties in chemistry was brought into public notice than had ever yet been promulgated from the laboratories of science.

The greatest wonder in my estimation, was Gentel's (of Vienna) apparatus for conveying two messages to two different places at the same moment of time along the same wires. This is a triumph, indeed!

There was a central saloon of great beauty and attrac-

tiveness, called the "Pavillon du Panorama." This was surrounded by covered courts crowded with curiosities and the choicest specimens of the manufacturing taste of the Parisians. Jewellery, enamels, military weapons, and domestic furniture were here accumulated in the most fascinating variety and attractiveness. Tapestries, bearing the appearance of the most exquisite body-colour paintings, from the looms of the Gobelins and from Beauvais—silver plateaux and table services; Sèvres vases and tea and coffee sets of surpassing beauty—carpets of every variety of pile and pattern, tint and brilliancy—upholstery in all its multifarious adaptations to the uses of domestic life, and the requirements of luxury and fashion—musical instruments in profusion, for every department of the completest orchestra—cabinets and master-pieces of buhl, marqueterie—mosaic and other inlaid tables and panels which might be placed in apposition with the perfection of Roman or Florentine workmanship. *A-propos* of cabinets, one of our English firms (Jackson and Graham, of Oxford Street) had contributed a splendid specimen which was continually surrounded by the French visitants, and seemed to elicit their unqualified praise.

I was delighted at the French school of design. Scherrer of Nancy exhibited a vast drawing in white and black water-colour; the pattern of a gown to be worked in lace for the Empress. The coloured designs, alone, for gown-prints and for veils, shawls, and scarves, from a scale of two inches square to one foot, were of matchless excellence.

Turning back again to the cabinet department, I stood at gaze on a magnificent pulpit, carved in a style altogether worthy of the best specimens in Flanders. It would afford

the preacher a range of walk, right and left, equal to the largest rostra of Milanese or Venetian cathedrals; being thirty feet in height and twenty-five in width. And not far from this *balcon de théologie* were altar pieces, the panels of which displayed carving similar to that which many of my readers may remember having admired in our splendid Warwickshire sideboard of 1851. Contiguous to this stood a splendid bookcase, in the pediment of which was the terrestrial globe, two feet in diameter, in motion. Bedsteads, sofas, ottomans, chairs, tables, oval sideboards, consols and screens, chiffoniers, and brackets, of countless variety and handsomest conceivable design, attracted admiring multitudes; but their eagerness to examine all these elegant productions of consummate skill was *insouciance* personified in comparison with the ardour displayed in the central pavilion, to gaze on the Court diamonds and certain other costly jewels, submitted for a time to the public eye of France. These valuables were elevated on a lofty platform, approachable by a very narrow passage framed in ironwork, with interposing bars and barriers, admitting the advance of one person only at a time; and remarkable enough it was to behold sixty or seventy panting Frenchmen and women, ranged two and two, as if threading their way, *selon les règles*, into a theatre; and proceeding, in most patient conformity with the prescribed order of their approach, step by step, to the stairs leading to the top of the platform; where, as on a small altar, where the devoted admirer might offer homage to the "first water," the diamonds, emeralds, and pearls, that could purchase a province, were awaiting their inspection; a back stair being annexed to the platform for returning into the area below.

Messrs. Hancock's "Hope diamond" (blue) and Miss Burdett's jewels were the theme of every group of Parisian ladies, in the immediate vicinity of this precious *recueil*; and next in attraction were Hunt and Roskell's jewellery and gold and silver articles which elicited, as they well might, enthusiastic commendation from parties regarded as connoisseurs in that category of taste. Another turn or two brought me into the main Palace, redolent with the scent of orange-tree blossoms, syringas, geraniums, and other highly odoriferous plants and flowers; and here I came speedily within full view of the British department. The riches transmitted to this dépôt from Manchester alone would constitute an unique collection. Leeds, Nottingham, Sheffield, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Dundee, Limerick, Belfast and Dublin, in all the brilliancy and pride of their time-honoured ascendant as manufacturing capitals, shone forth conspicuous, and gladdened the eyes of the few of my countrymen discernible in the general crowd. The poplins from Ireland were objects of special enquiry. Birmingham and Bradford appeared to fall short in this flattering national display; but the Staffordshire pottery elicited universal praise. Some of Daniels' contributions were of surpassing excellence.

I saw many groups waiting for their turn to inspect a clever model (which had been exhibited in Hyde Park, in 1851) of Exeter Hall, during the performance of an Oratorio.

Erard exhibited magnificent pianos; but, in the general crowd and confusion, I missed seeing any from Collard or Broadwood, who, it is to be presumed, had not left our London instruments unrepresented. Mechi's dressing-

cases seemed the coveted of all beholders :—much amusement, also, being created by the announcement from some of the bystanders, that he was as familiar with rams and bulls, and sithes and manure, as with razors and scent-bottles !

Wilson, of New Bond Street, challenged Saxony itself with his specimens of British linen-drapery, which the French women seemed fully to appreciate ; and his neighbour Lapworth had suspended on high several samples of most successful rivalry with the fabrics of France, whose carpets retain their brilliancy longer than their threads ; a drawback well understood by all housekeepers in our own country, at least, where the use of this article of furniture is in proportion of a hundred to one, compared with its adoption in France. The last objects that struck me as displaying rarest excellence, were a looking-glass from some Belgian firm, eighteen feet by ten, and another, *not silvered*, twenty by twelve, from one of the principal manufactories of France.

A large church organ was in full play during the whole of my visit ; every tone of which reminded me of the Hyde Park Building. It proved to be one of those exhibited there in 1851.

It being too dark, when I completed my hurried survey, to cross the road and examine the picture galleries, I was compelled to defer this till my return from the Eastern provinces. I felt, assuredly, that, for the present, I had seen enough ; enough to be able to appreciate most deeply the value of these international exhibitions ; of their noble rivalry, and of their civilizing and refining influences. As an industrial display, it was more than equal to its great

prototype. We have not been outdone, but we are fully matched ; and may learn much, very much, from what has been brought under our eye and notice, to admire and to imitate;* and the attention, admiration, and energetic competitorship which the contemplation of such infinite forms of excellence could not but awaken in the minds of the industrial classes of every civilized nation that sent its working men and mechanics as visitors to the mighty collection, must tend rapidly to illuminate and refine, where hitherto there has been comparative darkness and barbarism. I cannot believe that any careful observer of even the ten thousandth part of what I saw this day, accumulating materials for useful thought, and laying to heart the humanizing truths inculcated by so vast a display of inspired mind and intellect, could walk forth from its arena unaffected by such an appeal to every right feeling within him, or fail to become, the more frequently he resorted to such a scene of tuition, a wiser and a better man.

* As much may be asserted with reference to the great *Agricultural Exposition* which, on the same site and premises, succeeded to that of Science and Art, and filled Paris and the mind of every foreigner resorting to it, last year, with wonder and admiration.

CHAPTER III.

The just claims of Paris, as a capital, to the admiration of all foreigners—Remarks on French character, and the actual state of moral and political feeling in Paris: its institutions, public administration, and Government officers—Church of St. Roch—Abbé de l'Épée's monument and remarkable epitaph—Deaf and Dumb—Administration of the Eucharist—Advantages of quitting the direct route in travelling—From Paris to Meaux, and its roses—Smoke around Paris—Curious cultivation of land—Peculiarly constructed fences—Potato crops—Cause of the universal growth of poplars and willows, in France—Scarceness of windmills—Account of Louis Philippe's concealment, at the outbreak of the Great Revolution, at Dammartin—Forest of Bondy—The manure laboratories: superiority of the "Poudrette de Bondy" to foreign guano.

I ENTERED Paris on the 7th of July, and left it on the 10th. There is an alliterative phrase familiar to the Italian ear, especially in Tuscany, relative to dull, dreary old Pisa—"Pisa pesa à chi posa," (intimating that it is a heavy, oppressive place of sojourn,) to which the *mot* of the French, that Paris wants but little to become "Paradis," by the insertion of A D between R and I, becomes an appropriate pendant. Perhaps, of all the capitals, in or out of Europe, there is not one that sits so light to the visitor, and offers him so many *agréments*, at every turn, be he ever so grave and good a man, as the

great metropolis of France. I have often heard the French exclaim, "Pour s'instruire en philosophe; pour bien mener la vie, on doit demeurer à Londres.* Pour bien s'amuser de jour en jour, il faut vivre à Paris." They pass a still more gratifying compliment on our fair countrywomen: "For a sprightly creature that shall beguile care, marry a Frenchwoman; for steady, domestic companionship, choose a daughter of England." All this would lead us to conceive that our lively neighbours know, at least, what is sterling good: Their universal inclination to adopt, or their capacity to enjoy it, is quite another matter. Nevertheless, Paris is a delightful and edifying place of residence for those who know how to use it aright, and to enjoy the intellectual gratification derivable from occasional intercourse with the most refined minds and manners in enlightened Europe. An introduction to really good and eligible society in Paris is sure to elevate every right-thinking Englishman's opinion of the people; and the cultivation of familiar acquaintance with the many amiable and conscientious men who are incessantly occupied in promoting the temporal and eternal interests of the community at large will never fail to remove that far too common impression, cherished even by sensible observers of human character, that the French mind is slow in addressing its energies to ameliorate the social or moral condition of mankind; however reckless in the perpetration of outrage and violence involving the misery of entire generations. This prejudice imputes to a people quite as susceptible of kindly influences, and as noble in nature, as

* As Montesquieu came over to reside two years in England: "it being," in his opinion, "the best country to think in!"

our own, an incapacity, as it were, of acting with sincerity, however zealously, in any one good thing. It distrusts all their counsels, and questions all their truth, with the allegation that there is more to attract the eye and gain the ear in France than to reach the heart; that there is no steadfastness in the loyalty, no genuineness in the patriotism, no vitality in the religion, of a nation whose revolutions have been as numerous as their dynasties, and whose infidelity and "oppositions of science, falsely so called," have hardly left them a Faith. This is not the light by which we are to view, nor the spirit in which we are to judge, our interesting neighbours' character. Their annals, it is true, abound with the records of turbulence, anarchy and bloodshed; but these have been the issues of misrule; not the unprovoked excesses of free, well-governed subjects; and the frantic enormities of their insurrectionary revolts have always been traced to the errors of government, the most inconsistent with national prosperity, or individual happiness; to selfish domination by which the real wants of the country were disregarded, and the temper of its inhabitants petitioning for liberty and justice was contemned. Those inhabitants are a sensitive, but not a captious race; and their greatest offence, according to their own statements, through the last forty years, has been the desire to see the government of the country more closely assimilated to the principles of our own Constitution, than the natural bias of their minds, and the tendency of their aspirations to self-rule and republican supremacy, would bear. "There would be no discontent were there no unfair treatment; no outbreak were there no irritation. Your forms of government—your enlightened religious

training—your public and private education, combine to make you the secure, and respected, and powerful, and happy people you are. Endow us with the same privileges, and let us share your advantages and blessings, and our felicity would be perfect.” Such was the language employed on all occasions of calm, deliberate converse, with men grown old amidst the vicissitudes of bygone years, and who appeared to be anticipating a period when Wisdom’s voice would cry aloud, and, however late, be heard, and be justified of her children. Indeed, I may place it on record as the grave opinion of all the worthiest of their nation with whom I have discoursed, at many a time and place, upon the subject ever uppermost in their minds and hearts, that the faults and unhappiness of the French sprung from these main defects; the want of a time-perfected and hallowed Constitution—of a reformed and purified religion—and of an education based on the comprehension, appreciation, and deep veneration of both. The public vices, they urged, had been exaggerated, and blazoned to the world as the gross immorality of France; the private virtues of the God-fearing families that constituted “the salt of the earth,” on the same soil, were left unrecorded;—as little noticed as they were known. The code of their morality and the tendency of general taste were not to be inferred from the corruptions still clinging to the periodical press. Eugène Sue was not without his antidote, and Dumas would soon be but a despised name. If the literature of the country had exposed the vicious principles engrafted by the propagandists of evil in the last fatal century, the improved tone of moral feeling had, at length, begun not only to rebuke, but to counteract, those defilements; and the cir-

culuation of trash, emanating from what had been expressly called the "Satanic School" of Paris, was, at length, contracted within comparatively insignificant limits; the opprobrium, in point of fact, exceeding the notoriety; and the flame that used to kindle the worst passions of depraved nature beginning "to pale its ineffectual fire."

These are revelations on which we may ponder with some degree of hope and confidence; because satiety creates, at last, disgust; and the embodiment of indecency in letter-press is already nauseating the taste of even "young France." It is affirmed by many that the moral condition of the rising generation is healthier than the political; that communistic doctrines and the inculcation of that false philosophy which would fain persuade the masses that republican institutions are the only bases of national prosperity and happiness, are still agitating the mind and sapping the allegiance, not only of the educated and reading classes, but of the lowest grade of ignorant labourers in all the most populous and influential Departments; especially where employment is precarious, wages inadequate to meet enhanced prices, and a morbid propensity to combinations and conspiracies superseding the healthier feeling which would second the efforts of the State to ameliorate, by Public Works and the remission of imposts, the general condition of the people. The contaminating principles disseminated by those evil agencies which, under every form of government, (be it king, president, or emperor, in the seat of power), are incessantly active in fomenting disloyalty and insubordination, have accomplished their object only too successfully among that portion of inhabitants in the provinces of all others most

susceptible of such influence, namely, the smallest land-owners and occupiers, and the labourers—themselves the most miserably needy of all proprietors—whose stake in the soil of which they possess but an infinitesimal share, is, under existing circumstances, too insignificant, however tenaciously asserted, to induce their obedience, and prompt a conservative spirit, zealous of tranquillity and striving at contentment. These too easily perverted subjects of the realm, murmurers of old, and foremost in the outbreak of the Great Revolution, are now exhorted to look for redemption from every trouble in life, under whatever shape of adversity, through the intervention of the first revolt that should plunge France once more into anarchy, and enable those who have “nothing to lose and everything to gain,” to improve their condition and future circumstances in proportion with the extent of the general overthrow.

It is a great and solid consolation to know from the most authentic sources of credit, where convictions shared by men of every shade of political feeling force the assurance of such fact, that this under-current of plotting disaffection and wickedness is powerless in respect of any damage to the State. The necessity of order has never been more generally and deeply felt than at the present period; and public confidence reposes a wise trust in the stability of that power which has not only preserved, but exalted, the dignity of the empire in the eyes of nations; and called into ceaseless activity all those energies which dearly gained experience has proved to be most patriotically and gloriously employed when directed to the advancement of internal prosperity. The onward movement, at this time, is in favour of national individual improvement, of

more generally religious and enlightening Christian principles; of a nearer approximation to the *morale* of industrious, reflecting, and self-respecting England. The Church, conciliated by happiest policy into earnest and most effective co-operation, promotes these aims and tendencies; and has gained, within three or four years, the lost ground of a century. Her voice is heard, and her exhortations have not returned to her void. There is a thronging of temples and a concourse, (not, as heretofore, of female devotees only, but of men of all ranks,) on those solemn occasions where their appearance used to provoke a sneer; and in districts where "associations for the more reverential observance of the Sabbath" have succeeded, beyond all hope and expectation, in swaying mens' minds and hearts to happier ways and holier influences. As an ear-witness and an eye-witness, also, while my own observation confirmed all that had been stated to me by deep-thinking and right-minded citizens of no mean city, I rejoice in the belief that the improvements in the French capital are not limited to the enlargement of its highways, the completion of its palaces, the encouragement of its artisans, and the multiplied facilities of maintaining and extending every branch of lucrative trade. To use a homely, but expressive, term of commendation,—the place is become more "respectable" than in bygone days. Thousands of hands that used to hang down in indolence, or join for the indulgence of many a mischievous imagination, are now steadily and profitably employed; and "business habits" have superseded much of that mischief which Satan is said to find for idle hands to do. The Exposition of 1855, was most felicitous in its operation on the uni-

versal mind. It gave a stimulus to enterprise, perseverance, and exertion, the impulses of which are in full force. The patrons and promoters of skill and science hailed its influence as the element of national good and civic tranquillity; the pious rejoiced to see ambition and ingenuity directed into healthy channels; and augured soberness and discreeter living from each mechanic's awakened consciousness of his interest in the arts and occupations of peace. The subject of such conversation as furnished matter for this little episode arose naturally from my visits to the Palais de l'Industrie: and the arguments of my French companions might have impressed a far less willing hearer with the conviction that their country has days of happiness, as well as of renown, in store. They urged the responsible position maintained by her at this moment; the obligations she has to fulfil; the destinies she has to accomplish: the sense entertained, by every occupant of a decent home in the metropolis, of the blessings of a firm and settled government, and of reformation in the political, religious and moral tone of public feeling. On this they dwelt emphatically, as though it were the opportune and appropriate season for *them* to tell and for *me* to hear "some new thing;" and well had they deserved my thanks who had

. "vouchsaf'd

This friendly condescension, to relate

Things else by me unsearchable——."

Informed and enlightened to this extent, (and such reasoning ought to be justly appreciated), I felt not, as many have declared they feel, that to tread the pavements of Paris, and to sojourn among its wonders of Genius and

Art, Taste, Industry and Invention, was to breathe in the tainted atmosphere of evil. It is superfluous, at this advanced period, to renew hackneyed comparisons between this City and London. The features and characteristics of both are well known: and as regards the *locale*, and the essential points of difference between the two great capitals, I suppose either might derive immense improvements and fully commensurate advantages by imitating the excellences of the other. If we contrast Parisian short comings with London comforts, and the glitter of decorative taste in the exterior of the one metropolis with that substantial enjoyment of domestic privacy and peace within the other which passeth show, we may assuredly indulge in honest self-gratulation. The competency, moreover, and permanent well-being of the middle classes, strengthened and confirmed, as it assuredly is, by the tractable disposition and good common sense of *our* 'ouvriers' or work-people, cannot be too thankfully appreciated: and roam where we will, it is no empty boast, nor the utterance of vain-glorious self-sufficiency, to affirm that there is 'Nothing like old England!' Still let not the excursionist Londoner who spends his little month in PARIS speak disparagingly of that pride and idol of the French:—Like Babylon of old, nay, like our own overgrown metropolis, it involves many an abomination, and, as a sister university of crime, foment only too great a mass of multifarious evil; but it is also a wide scene of the exercise of all the virtues that dignify and adorn humanity; and, doubtless, He who discerneth the spirits of men hath "much people in that city." We have but to enter its public institutions, its libraries, halls, and colleges, lyceums and

national schools; its hospitals and asylums,—and behold men of all ages immersed in profound and arduous study, and in the hourly pursuit of excellent knowledge; or toiling in all the offices and positive dangers of Christian charity; and devoting the prime of existence to the promotion of public good,—accordingly as their sphere of usefulness has been ordained—to feel assured that we are surrounded by the great and good, perhaps the best and most eminent, of a mighty nation; and that whatever be their faults or foibles, the instability of their political principles and constitution, or the inherent defects of their *morale*, these men are patriots at heart, and require only good government to maintain them in the exercise of many a public and private virtue which may render them benefactors to their generation. I neither feel nor write in the spirit of partiality; but it is a mistake to consider frivolity the chief characteristic of the French people. To sit light “to accidental evils,” is an element of their *physique*: their animal spirits befriend and sustain them, where we are prone to succumb; and herein they make the happiest use of their philosophy; but they feel acutely, and are fully as capable as the most discreet among us, of addressing themselves, in a frame of prudent and determinate counsel, to the gravest deliberations. In all their State departments they are exemplarily active and intelligent; transacting business with an exactitude and attention to detail which preserves the most lucid order in the midst of accumulating difficulties and embarrassments. Their executive government is firm, decisive and efficient; their official discipline most rigid. No political changes or convulsions derange the administration of the bureaux. The duty of each is too minutely

defined to be impeded thereby ; and being wholly free from the trammels and obstructions of imperative Routine, and procrastinating "Circumlocution," the working processes are too complete in every branch of the public service to suffer interruption and injurious interference from without.

The result is, that under whatever form of government, the State sustains no detriment from the inefficiency, ignorance, or indifference of its officers, who, being, for the most part, *the proper men in the proper places*, render their services with that *esprit de corps* and high sense of responsibility which contribute so effectually to the success of wise and energetic measures ; each *employé* considering himself implicated in the issues of the existing administration, and, like one that magnifies his office, exerting every energy to avert the discredit of blundering from his own particular department, the mortification of failure and impeachment from his *chef*, and disaster, and opprobrium from the State.* Hence, it has resulted that, whether in respect of civil or military achievements—of their appropriation of the advantages of a long peace, or of the conduct of their expeditions in war, they have done eminently well. Surmounting many a fearful crisis, they have often raised their financial credit, shaken and overthrown as it had been by a combination of evils, to a prosperity deemed impossible ; and with the elasticity of a power conscious of its inexhaustible resources, have, by turns, averted or counteracted monetary panics and dangers which would have crushed a less intelligent and less energetic people. Their provinces feel, beyond all precedent, the cherishing influences of a widely increasing

* The Prefects in the provinces afford occasional exceptions.

commerce:—Trade was never more active, and their rural population was never more generally employed: there may be smouldering discontent and disaffection among the vagabond socialists, who organise “complaining in their streets;” but their capital, finding ample occupation for artisans that seek an honest livelihood among its labouring thousands, will become a self-supporting city, as well as the most splendid metropolis of the world.

As the greatest warriors of modern times, they have sent forth armaments by sea and land, whose powers, fostered and confirmed by all the aids of effective maintenance, have, at length, become our instructors, and forbidden us to undervalue the French alliance, or the French mind. He, therefore, who feels himself at home on the banks of the Seine, and knows what goodly fruits are ever ripening there, may, with just cause, incline to linger in Paris. For my own part, I should never be at a loss to derive edification, and to benefit by many a genial influence, where so much is admirably taught, and so great minds and hearts are at work *non sibi, sed aliis*; but, at the period of my recent visit, a journey of seven hundred leagues lay before me; and, after a few parting glances, and a stroll along the magnificent Rue Rivoli, now prolonged, widened, and adorned on a scale unapproached by any other street in Europe, I confined my attention to a few of the public buildings and churches remarkable for their antiquity or associations, and prepared to set out on my wanderings. It was on the eve of departure that I happened to pace the north aisle of the parish church of St. Roch. Here I again saw the singular monument erected to the memory of the Abbé de l’Epée, whose whole

life was devoted to the instruction of persons deprived, by nature, of the powers of speech ; an art of which he derived the first ideas from a Spanish treatise which fell into his hands accidentally. He was not the inventor, as some have supposed, of this art which is said to have originated with Pedro Ponce, a Benedictine of Valladolid, who lived in the middle of the sixteenth century, and died in 1584. Ponce's system was followed up by that of Conrad Amman, of Schaffhausen, in 1680, who died in Flanders when De l'Épée was but twelve years old ; and the latter was succeeded by the Abbé Sicard, who, three years previous to the death of his precursor, became director of the Deaf and Dumb School at Bordeaux. Proceeding to Paris in 1789 he was elected successor to l'Épée, and three years afterwards narrowly escaped the guillotine ; being arrested, by order of the *commune* of Paris, in the midst of his pupils. After a few days' imprisonment, his friends succeeded in obtaining his enlargement ; and he lived from that time henceforth unmolested. I saw him in the year 1814, in London, delivering a Lecture on the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb, with two or three of his pupils ; one of whom, by name Massieu, awakened very deep interest. He was surrounded by a very distinguished auditory, comprising several members of the Ancienne Noblesse, and the Duke of Orleans, afterwards Louis Philippe, king of the French. The latter stood within two feet of my seat, and bore, at that time, the appearance of an intelligent, lively, handsome man ; he was then only forty-one years of age.

The monument in the church of St. Roch exhibits a bronze bust of De l'Épée in his sacerdotal robes—sur-

mounting an elevated stone pedestal, which bears the subjoined remarkable inscription :

VIRO
ADMODUM MIRABILI
SACERDOTI DE L'EPEE
QUI FECIT
EXEMPLO SALVATORIS
MUTOS LOQUI
CIVES GALLIÆ
HOC
MONUMENTUM DEDICARUNT
AN. 1840.

NATUS AN. 1712
MORTUUS AN. 1789.*

Under this is a panel, in the sculptured stone, exhibiting the whole of the digital alphabet; namely, the twenty-six various positions in which the fingers are held for intercommunication with the Deaf and Dumb; and, on either side of the pedestal, which is of pentagonal form, and rather uncouth in its general appearance, is a young child looking up reverentially to the bust.

France owed this tardily-made acknowledgment to the indefatigable, self-denying Abbé who, at the age of twenty-six years, refused a bishopric offered to him by Cardinal Fleury, for certain valuable services rendered to his father; but there is a palpable error in the inscription as regards the benefit conferred upon the dumb: and the wording

* Literally, the citizens of France dedicated this monument, in the year 1840, to a man most worthy of all admiration, the ecclesiastic De l'Epée, who, after the example of our Saviour, made the dumb to speak. He was born A.D. 1712. He died A.D. 1789.

seems to arrogate a power attributable only to the Divine Being, whose beneficence he is declared to have imitated. He did *not* enable the dumb to speak ; but to maintain intercourse with those who could speak, as well as with those who could not, through the medium of arbitrary manual signs ; and the expression adopted in his eulogium is more accordant with concise Latinity, than with modest actual fact.

While I was in the aisles, two priests were administering the consecrated wafer, the Romish Eucharist, to a considerable number of communicants ; I calculated there might be a hundred and twenty—one-third of them school girls ; the remainder, grown women. Only two men were distinguishable on the occasion. When this Sacrament is thus solemnized, “a fair linen cloth” is placed along the entire length of the low rail separating the nave from the choir ; strings being tied to the iron scroll-work, at intervals, to secure it. The parties came up in twelves ; being marshalled, as it were, by an official like one of our vergers ; and remained hardly a minute after ranging themselves on their knees, opening their mouths, and swallowing the wafer : the most imperfect, lifeless, unimpressive act of Faith, perhaps, that a Protestant eye could witness.

Here, then, for a time, I take leave of Paris : I am setting out on a discursive journey in which it will be my express purpose to deviate occasionally from the direct line and beaten track, in order to see men, places, and things after my own fashion ; and linger here and there upon points of interest, which, in the whirl of rapid travel and “go-a head” progress, (too widely encouraged by railway *facilities*) are apt to remain from year to year unnoticed

and unknown. No attempts will be perceptible in the following pages, to furnish particular descriptions of provinces, political information, statistical reports, or other such matter for grave and contemplative study. A memorandum on one side of my tablets, and a sketch on the other, in addition to many drawings with which, by favour of fine weather, I succeeded in filling my portfolio, were the sum of my pretensions; and from these hourly pencillings by the way I exclusively write. In point of fact, the ground I travelled over has, for the most part, been explored, in bygone years, by eminent men, whose several contributions to Literature and Art have left nothing to be desired. It is just possible, nevertheless, that as in the days when "locomotives" were comparatively unknown, and ambitious tourists travelled *en poste*, the pedestrian, somehow or other, contrived to bring home more curious stories, pleasanter anecdotes and reminiscences, better sketches and distincter knowledge of scenes, men and manners, than had been gathered from the same localities by his acquaintances hurrying along in their fleet chariots or well-horsed coaches; so, at the present period, a man who can summon resolution to alight with "bag and baggage" at every station which he knows to be contiguous to a spot replete with interesting associations, or with features for a sketch or two which would well repay him for such a halt, will return to his own "den" at home with *matériel* for conversation and social amusement which the steady followers of the direct route, rejoicing in Hand-books and Itineraries, have probably failed to find, though equally competent and eager with himself to appreciate them.

Having twice adopted this plan without disappointment to myself or others, and considered it applicable to the whole line of route described in a Summer's Pilgrimage which would take me through upwards of twenty departments of France, I set out a third time, to wander from station to station ; and having thrown the contents of my note books into a more legible form than they exhibit in their original entries, I respectfully lay them before my readers, with the preamble, that, as I failed in finding a companion for the excursion, they will, it is hoped, excuse the continual "I by myself I," which must of necessity dwell and enlarge upon things heard and seen ; and will thus considerably peruse the evidence, not so much of an egotistical narrator, as of a faithful and unprejudiced witness.

The early train which was to convey me to Meaux, started from the terminus of the Great Eastern Railway of France, issuing from Paris on the North side between the fauxbourgs of St. Denis and St. Martin. Travellers are apt, in my opinion, to pay more attention to their "belongings" (canes, umbrellas, parasols, purses, tickets, books, or sandwichcases) at first setting out from the Railway Stations, than to the wonderful display of architectural genius, mechanical ingenuity, tasteful adornments, and costly design of the surrounding buildings and approaches, through which the arrival and departure of hundreds of thousands are effected, day after day, from year to year, with perfect ease and security. Now the French companies have greatly distinguished themselves in this matter ; and the Strasburg station above all other deserves special notice and inspection. On the inward or *street* side, it is an object of general

admiration; and this circumstance, combining with the desirableness of adopting the handsomest line of avenue to the heart of the magnificent city, induced the Directors of the Northern and Eastern lines to connect their termini by a branch, constructed expressly for the purpose, which would enable the British Queen to proceed towards St. Cloud through the most beautiful and interesting streets of Paris. Her earliest impressions must have been in the highest degree favourable; for the world contains not a line of space so replete with the most pleasing features, brilliancy and fascination. On the *country* side, the issue of this particular railway carries it over the canal of St. Denis, the *fosses* of the fortifications, and the Route de Flandres; and here the continuing gaze of the passengers is amply repaid. The banks that shelve down, as in a ravine, on either side of the rail, as the train rushes forth, are profusely planted with thriving young acacias, and, here and there, a few mountain-ash trees, which impart a most graceful appearance, and screen the formal masonry through a considerable length of way till the cutting ceases. This stone work, which appears to be laid without cement, is occasionally ranged in narrow ledges or terraces where loam well-sown with grass seeds soon forms a *tapis vert*, or green "velvety" strip of mould, admirably adapted for the insertion of young trees and shrubs, and for the compaction of the strata forming the incline. For the readier supply of such adornments, large arboretums or tree-nurseries are maintained at intervals of from two to three miles in the immediate contiguity of the line: an illustration, in its way, of that system of providential arrangement and forecast which characterises French administration in all its branches. I

may add, *par parenthèse*, that this Strasburg line pays 12 per cent to shareholders.

The corn crops speedily appear, even before the train reaches the outer line of fortifications, and exhibit an extent of suburban husbandry very dissimilar to what would be discernible were this advantageous locality occupied by British tillers of the soil. The farmers, stunted and embarrassed by the *parcellement* system, have not capital enough to employ the tumbrils and wagons that would otherwise be seen drawing the best of subsoil dressing on to the land from the stable-yards of Paris; and I surmise that the greater part of this goes away, as from London, in barges, to the remoter farms on the banks of the river. The market-gardeners are doing as well as ever on the north side of the capital, and can afford to enrich their territory in proportion to its abundant yield of fruit and vegetables; but no such indications of mending the soil appear in the scanty wheat and barley crops, nor in any other cereals, in this district.

Paris, like our own metropolis, is keeping all giant chimneys of recent growth at a very respectful distance from her streets and palaces. They surround the city in all directions; and, to one who remembers it forty, or even twenty years since, present an entirely novel feature.

The smoke begins, at length, to veil the once clearly distinguished domes and towers to as great an extent as the carbonous cloud that encompasses the generality of manufacturing towns: but this is an insignificant drawback, indeed, compared with the hourly deposit of soot that would otherwise settle on the rich architectural and sculptured treasures exposed day and night in Paris; not to mention

that wherever we see these "columns pointing to the skies," we recognise the presence of wealth-creating mills and laboratories, and the fabrics where national industry becomes the surest conservator of national tranquillity.

I could not help thinking how astonished an English cultivator would feel, as he entered the precincts of this railway, to see wheat, onions, barley, French beans, clover, poppies (!) and sorrel, growing in immediate juxtaposition, (in the order in which I have described them), strip by strip ; agreeably to the operation of the partage system, which parcels out the land into these infinitesimal patches of cultivation, and leaves its surface "in most admired disorder," by the time all the produce has been carried. The order of their shifts, and the terms of their covenants may be abnormal enough ; but the French farmers appropriate every foot of soil to advantage, and, though they eschew hedges, are model *fence-makers*. Hundreds of yards' length of strong portable and folding fence are made up in the towns and villages, (as I witnessed) with split oak, poplar, or maple ; and iron, and, occasionally, zinc wire, banding them four times in its ties. This is set up along the line of fields to be protected, till such time as any fence at all becomes unnecessary ; or, till the quick-set boundary of white thorn or acacia, is grown up so high as to render the dead fence superfluous. It is then removed and erected elsewhere. The material lasts several years, and is inexpensive at the outset. I wish I could see it introduced into our country : for it effectually prevents trespass either by man or beast ; is wonderfully light and convenient, requiring neither posts nor stretchers, and engrossing no space in its line of position ; and, being open as a wide-meshed net,

excludes neither air nor heat. It is to be apprehended, however, that the excess of rain in our climate would soon destroy the metallic portion of the materials; though, in the hands of a spirited experimentalist, *galvanized* iron wire, where zinc was not used, might counteract this evil.

The breadth of potato plant around Paris is of vast extent; indeed, throughout France this vegetable appears to be more abundantly cultivated than in England: yet it is notorious that one may traverse the empire, and not find a genuinely good potato. The beautiful specimens with which we are familiar in our own country, from Yorkshire down to Penzance and the Scilly Isles—those mealy bulbs which break down in the plate, like little balls of flour, and emulate the most farinaceous bread-fruit—are wholly unknown to our continental neighbours. They exist not in the country; neither are our prime “kidneys” to be found in any single department, except where opulent proprietors who have resided for some time in this kingdom, and made a point of introducing good sorts into their forcing frames, succeed in rearing our “ash-leaf,” “regents,” and “flukes,” and similar varieties. Instead of this goodly growth we find a close-grained, yellow, waxy root fit only to be sliced and fried; or rendered edible by the softening processes of the buttery *sauté*. Hence the *pomme-de-terre au naturel* (plain boiled), in or out of its “jacket,” is not a dish recognized by the French cuisine; and is only brought upon table “by special command,” to the amazement of all beholders!

This ride of thirty miles presented to view a large district of timber-growth. While coal continues to be a scarce commodity in France, the preservation of dense

forests will, of course, remain a matter of necessity; but one cannot help wishing there were corn fields and food for millions where, at present, thousands of acres are covered with wood for fuel. The eyes of my fellow-countrymen have, doubtless, been worried, so to speak, by the seemingly never-ending plantations of *poplar* trees. For many a long mile these formal, unsightly poles obtrude their ugliness, and screen more genial features, in every district of the country, without any ostensible object.

The explanation afforded by all the natives to whom I happened to address inquiry on this subject was, for the most part, as follows: first, the poplar is of very rapid growth, inexpensive as to cultivation, and found to thrive where other trees would dwindle. Without engrossing space by overhanging boughs and wide-spreading foliage, it serves to shade meadow and grazing land, which, in the absence of such intervening shelter, would be parched and rendered useless by the summer heat. It supplies good fuel to ovens, though not to ordinary fire-places; when taken to the saw-pit, it makes durable framework to sustain slating; neither warping like elm, nor snapping asunder in the middle, like beech. It is extensively serviceable on farm premises for "use-poles," sheds, rough fencing, styes, and "stop-gaps." The planks cut from a full-grown tree, make the best floor-boards for granaries; for, as the wood is bitter to the taste, that noxious grub, the weevil, whose burrowing is the dread of the garner, is effectually excluded; as in wardrobes we introduce cedar linings and Russia leather*

* The scent of which is produced by the hide being tanned in the bark of the birch-tree.

to repel moths. But, strange to say, as the maple yields sugar, so is the poplar converted into food: not, indeed, for man, but for his beast. When the haystack is half consumed, and the few turnips and mangold-wurzel-beet grown on the farm are nearly exhausted, the farmers begin to feed their oxen, cows, and sheep, and, occasionally their horses, with poplar leaves and twigs. Twice in the year (in spring and autumn,) they raise ladders against these trees, and sending up their young 'hands' with bill-hooks, strip them from top to bottom of all the young and tender shoots, and cast these into wagons, which convey hundreds of loads to the root-houses, sheds, and lofts, on the homestead, where they are stowed away and left to dry. As the winter sets in, these twigs and leaves are scattered in the sheep pens and bullock sheds or straw yards, as we should serve with sliced "Swedes" or mangold; and on this coarse and choking forage the animals are mainly fed through five or six months of the year. We know that, in some parts of the world, wild animals of large growth devour the branches of forest trees; and these high dried cuttings, which would be used in our country merely to stick garden-peas, may contain a certain amount of nutritious matter; but the inadequacy of such aliment towards any improvement of the condition of live stock is palpable: it is fodder one might resort to in time of siege or famine; but, even with an intermixture of more genial provision, it cannot but tend to keep the cattle in meagre leanness, and materially deteriorate the fibre of their flesh. I have been told a similar use is sometimes made, in the West of England, of the tender shoots of elm.

The traveller must, also, have noticed the excessive

growth of willows in France. These are as ugly as their tall neighbours just spoken of ; but, to a people delighting in baskets, the osier twigs are invaluable, and are in constant request. The quantity of wicker-work in requisition is enormous ; and the universal practice of carrying heavy loads in a long basket, like a clock-case, on a wooden framework extending down the back from the shoulders to below the hips, instead of the burden being carried on the head and eased by the “porter’s knot,”—(whether it be man or woman thus laden) gives rise to a continual demand for baskets ; to say nothing of the millions of such articles required for the conveyance of fruits, vegetables, and poultry to the home and foreign markets.

At Noisy-le-sec, (a favourite *meet* for the royal hounds, before 1789), about five or six miles distant from Paris, are two venerable old windmills, worthy *pendants* to those that stood formerly, to the delight of all landscape-painters, on Blackheath. These are rare objects in French rural scenery ;—and the pilgrim in search of the picturesque will find more in one or two groups of them at Boulogne than he will see afterwards for fifty leagues. I remember well how I used to miss their presence in Normandy. They are never *de trop* in a picture ; and, like coins, cabinets, and Hock wine, the older they are, the more valuable.

The next station was that of Bondy, a portion of whose forest we noticed at half-an-hour’s distance from the banks of the Marne ; not without reminiscences of the sagacious Dog of Montargis, who pointed out, in the recesses of these dense woods, the pit into which his murdered master had been cast ; and subsequently identified and singled out the

assassin Macaire, and overcame him in a judicial combat in the presence of Charles VI. "The story is extant," as Hamlet says of Gonzago's murder, "and written in very choice" French ; and albeit "somewhat musty," lends a zest, as all such local incidents do, to the summer morning's ride across a country suggesting these recollections. Of such a nature was the little narrative related to me by a fellow-passenger proceeding to Dammartin, by Omnibus from Meaux, as we were approaching the latter, and about to part. "It was in my village," said he, "on this line, at about twenty-five miles' distance from Paris, that the Duke of Orleans, afterwards King Louis Philippe, fleeing before his pursuers in the days of the Great Revolution, exchanged clothes with a mere peasant, whose cottage he had entered, and crept, thus disguised, into an oven. The *bonne femme*, aware of the rank and danger of the fugitive, 'had no occasion to bake that day, but immediately busied herself in thrusting bavins of underwood into the hiding-place. The day passed, however, without alarm from any quarter ; and the prince escaped, as we all know, from his native land, and reached America. When fortune had placed him on the throne, and given him the Palace of the Tuileries, on the Seine, in compensation for the oven on the Marne, our loyal Dammartin potato-grower resolved to pay him a visit. As might be supposed, the guards and grooms of the royal chambers repulsed him, and desired that he would, without loss of time, go about his business elsewhere, or take the consequences ; upon which he produced some particular signet, note, or keepsake, at sight of which he gave them to understand, in language too emphatic to be trifled with, the king would give them instructions to treat him

with rather more civility and deference. In a few seconds, the Chamberlain in attendance came to conduct him into the presence of Philippe of Orleans. His reception was of the most cordial kindness ; and he remained two hours in the palace, and sate at luncheon by the side of the sovereign whose gratitude and good-nature rejoiced to welcome his former deliverer. On returning to Dammartin, he opened a small packet placed in his hands at parting, and found himself possessed of a kingly present, which marked the sense entertained of his sympathy with misfortune in the hour of need.

BONDY has, of late years, acquired great celebrity in the agricultural world (of France) by the manufacture of a compost for land, possessing the *maximum* qualities of fertilization, and recognizable as the nearest approach to, and best of all substitutes for, farm-yard manure.

The French call it "Poudrette de Bondy," and designate it as the Natural European Guano. The processes through which the main ingredient passes have been already described in my Notes upon Calvados, the last time I visited Normandy : but the Bondy works occupy a space twelve times more extensive than the enclosure at Caen ;—being distributed over an area of fifty acres. The Firm consists of a rich and powerful Company, monopolizing all the night-soil of Paris, (fifteen miles distant), and the premises exhibit an accumulation of deposits from that gay and brilliant capital, from which the nose of a wheat or turnip grower could alone inhale grateful aromata. The soil undergoes a thorough incorporation ; and the decaying vegetable and animal matters, reach, by slow degrees, a complete fermentation ; the whole process occupying a

period of from two to three years, when, at length, a perfectly natural, homogeneous and unvarying manure is concreted, free from smell, and calculated to increase, to an extent hitherto unattainable by artificial admixtures, the productiveness of comparatively poor land, and, *a fortiori*, that of a generous and prolific soil.

The occupiers of land on the banks of the Seine and Marne, (the chief gainers, as I observed, by the proximity of their farms to the great metropolis,) have made experiments within the last three years with Foreign Guano and the pulverized matter above mentioned, on alternate breadths of wheat growth; extending the test over a very considerable width, and marked diversity of soil; and the result has invariably shown that the yield of crops manured with the Bondy desiccated night-soil exceeded by twenty per cent that which was realized from fields unsparingly bestrewed with bone-dust, soot, rape, oil-cake, and Guano. This would lead us to believe that the article thus chemically projected from the tanks and reservoirs of Bondy, avails for more than a mere top-dressing. An increased energy is infused into the soil, the operation of which is far less transitory than that of the ordinary substitutes for good "rot-dung;" and alters the nature, texture, and colour of the soil upon which it acts as an alterative, while it improves and enriches it with fresh organic matter and secretions of highly fertilizing quality. A farmer occupying a small estate in the neighbourhood of Evreux had just harvested his crop of Colza Rape, when I was returning in August, 1855, from Central France; and his testimony was conclusive on this subject. Having set apart a tract of land corresponding

exactly in extent with one on which a fellow-agriculturist had sown Colza and Foreign Guano, he dressed it with the Bondy powder exclusively. The average product from the Guanoed field was sixteen bushels to the English acre ; that from the *terre poudrée*, fifty four ; without any appearances of that exhaustion which the French cultivators impute as a serious objection to the employment of the Chincha Islands' deposit. Messieurs Richer, the manufacturers at Bondy, have conferred no light boon on their countrymen engaged in the ever active husbandry essential towards the supply of food to so vast a territory as France.

The enterprising tillers of the soil of that fine country are now so entirely independent of manure of remote supply, that, during the first three months of last year, France, with her enormous acreage and immense population looking to it for support, needed only 1606 tons of foreign guano ; while England, from the want of a more beneficial and more economical manure, imported in the same period no less than 52,129, which, exclusive of freight, would be worth £260,645. If the announcement of this strong fact should interest my agriculturist readers as much as it may surprise them, they will not, in future, hear with indifference the mention of the *powder* magazines of Bondy. It is a prominent instance of the long unregarded value of the refuse of large cities ; and finds a *pendant*, so to speak, in the negotiations renewed year by year among the contractors for *ashes* in London ; the price agreed upon, two years since, for one twelve-month's ashes, in Marylebone parish alone, having been no less than £5651.

At a quarter to nine o'clock we crossed the river Marne, which here is not wider than the Isis at Oxford ; and in less than twenty minutes afterwards reached our brief journey's end, by running into the station at Meaux, beyond which the train was not to proceed, and where, for the present, I shall leave my reader, while I may be supposed to be asking my nearest way to the Rose.

CHAPTER IV.

Erroneous notions of the English as to the "Rose de Meaux"—A conversation on roses—Provins and Provence—The cabbage and the moss-rose—Mr. Rivers of Sawbridgeworth—Mill machinery for compressing vegetables into alimentary cake—Supplies thereof to the army in the Crimea—The cathedral at Meaux—Bishop Bossuet—Doctrine of the "Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary"—Episcopal palace—Halt of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette there in the year 1791—The French and Prussian armies, in 1814, in this neighbourhood—Ferté-sous-Jouarre: its stupendous mill-stones—The quarries supplying England and America—Mode of raising and completing the stones—Beauty of the sylvan scenery on the site of the quarries—The sketch-book in a shower—Offer of a petticoat—Full-sized billiard-tables in beer-shops.

MANY a fair floriculturist, into whose hands these pages may eventually fall, will probably feel some degree of astonishment at the resolute manner in which, albeit no botanist, I carried out the determination, made a considerable time since, to visit "some fine day" the Pepinière at Meaux. The delicate little flower named after this place is too well known to need description; but, after all, it

appears that we particularize it too exclusively ; for it is not recognised at Meaux as the rose of the district, but grown there as a unit among hundreds of various sorts ; and receives no notice or distinction whatever from either public or private cultivators. When I addressed my earnest inquiries to good-natured Monsieur Darley Mullet, requesting him to show me the genuine little Rose de Meaux, which I gave him to understand was a sort of pet, under that name, in our gardens, he assured me we were all under a delusion ; for the flower in question was but an insignificant item in the catalogue, and certainly not the object of any such flattering inquiries, in France. He conducted me into the Rosarium, and showed me half an acre, radiant with pink petals, among which, after careful search, I descried our favourite. Being at once enlightened on this point, I asked him what he, as a first-rate cultivator, considered to be the rose *par excellence* ; whether of France or of other countries. “Beyond a doubt, the ‘Cabbage Rose,’” he replied. “Therein you have at once the fullest development of the form, the finest colour, and the most exquisite fragrance. Our ‘Géant de batailles,’ and ‘Field of the Cloth of Gold,’ and ‘Rose Reine,’ are of that order:”—and he here put one of the latter into my hand.—“This,” he added, “has never been surpassed ; but there are incomparable roses here of the same order, which we have imported from your own country. Your ‘Rosa Devoniensis’ may challenge the world ; and, as a golden decoration for house-fronts, arbours, and trellis arches, the ‘Yellow Banksia’ has no rival.”

Finding such genial compliments afloat in favour of the

realm and province from whence, as I told him, I was come, I ventured to inquire, as if unwilling to be altogether defeated in my investigation of the *mignon* species, whether there were any sorts smaller, and even more delicate, than our so called "Rose de Meaux." He replied that there was "la petite Rose Pompon;"* a miniature tree that seldom exceeded twelve inches in its extreme height, and bore a flower scarcely so large as a daisy; and, stooping down, he presently gathered one from an exquisitely delicate tree that stood close at hand, and laid it on my book; telling me they used it chiefly for borders, where they supersede the double daisy. Of the six or seven that we gathered, I sent two in a letter to England; (an eight inch envelope would have transmitted the whole tree!) and reserved the remainder in my pocket-book; but before I left the nursery, I made an accurate fac-simile of the "wee thing," albeit less "bonnie" than curious. The leaves and petals are of precisely the same formation with those of other roses; and the flower, when gathered, and attached to a gown or shirt front, might readily be mistaken, at a little distance, for a brooch. It is almost destitute of fragrance, and in colour is darker than the deepest tinted pink daisy.

The Cabbage Rose (*Rosa Centifolia*) lauded by M. Mullot, is the flower ascribed by our old botanists and earlier poets to Provence. The Provins Rose is of a totally different order. The highly intelligent Mr. Rivers, of Sawbridgeworth,† considers the Moss Rose an aboriginal

* "Pompon" signifies a trifling ornament added to their dress by women; also, a small globular tuft, as in a private soldier's cap.

† Author of "The Rose Amateur's Guide," (Longman).

of Provence ; but he tells me that often as he has searched for both species in Burgundy and Provence, he has never found the true type of either.

Monsieur Darley Mullet, here named, is a small proprietor, and inherited, by marriage, the landed estate (situate immediately in front of the station) in which the Rosarium, or Pepinière, is comprised. He himself, though born in France, and speaking the language of that country only, is of Irish extraction, as his name implies ; but, in accordance with the usage of the French, where the wife is endowed with real estate, he has annexed her family name to his own. He spoke of an English gentleman (living at no great distance from his own very comfortable family house) who took great interest in roses, but whose name, (as in the case of Buonaparte and Admiral Tchitchagoff) he says he never could pronounce, but had learned to spell ; and, accordingly, he wrote it down in my Note-Book as "Luttheroth." I remarked that this spelling was quite as questionable as his mode of pronunciation, and suggested that it might be "Lutterworth." He had another neighbour, (a tenant he said) of native repute, Monsieur St. Hilaire, an ex-minister of state, who had often been visited by Messrs. Thiers and Odillon Barrot, at the little cottage *ornée* he hired under him ; and here, he added, the English Marquis of Lansdowne had been a visitor also, at Christmas, 1854. My worthy informant seemed to be established in very good quarters ; his grounds command a delightful view of the cathedral, and all the public buildings and country lying beyond the town ; and, considering that, fifty years ago, when his late father-in-law bought the property, there were old elms and beeches alone

growing on the land, without habitation, path, or approaches of any kind, the clearance may be regarded as a wonderful specimen of combined ingenuity, industry and taste; but these are the very qualifications we should reckon upon in respect of any French settlers.

Seeing a very high chimney below, on the water side, and a large building annexed, I asked Mullett whether it was a paper-mill. In reply, I learned this was a very remarkable manufactory established of late years by a Monsieur Fournier, in whose hands the whole of the barge traffic on the Canal de l'Ourcq is held, and constant communication maintained hereby with Paris; not only for all such merchandize as is transportable generally by this most useful water-course; but for the produce, in particular, of the mill just mentioned, which is exclusively occupied in drying and compressing vegetables. By means of a twenty-four horse-power engine, the hydraulic pressure is brought to bear upon tons of cabbages, carrots, turnips, spinach, beans, peas, artichokes, onions, and other such garden stuff, partially macerated, till they assume the consistency, and receive the shape, of oil-cake. These tablets of concentrated vegetable matter are then thoroughly dried, and admit of being kept in store for a considerable period. When used, they are subjected to the action of boiling water, and begin to expand, and resume the colour and consistency of fresh herbs; and the quantity shipped off to the Crimea, about the period of my visit, was enormous. A cake of the size of a man's hand makes *potage* for eight persons. Darley Mullett remarked that it must have proved a highly lucrative concern; "for," said he, they buy "the fresh vegetables on the land hereabouts,

at ninety centimes the kilogramme, (threepence halfpenny a pound,) and sell the compressed matter at three francs and a half the kilogramme, (one shilling and fourpence three-farthings the pound)."

Be this as it might, the means of supplying so many relishing and wholesome ingredients to the camp-kettles of the army abroad seemed cheaply purchased even at this rate; for *potage* is meat, drink, and consolation to the French civilian, or *militaire*; and it would have been just as practicable, I would add, on the banks of the Thames as on those of the Canal de l'Ourcq.*

The river Marne rushes here through many a corn-mill, where the flour is ground for Parisian bakers. I saw several built on massive stone piers across the stream; each containing six pairs of Ferté-sous-Jouarre millstones. These are excellent substitutes for the three abbeys, and numerous convents of idle, ignorant nuns, which flourished in Meaux before the year 1792; and it is not easy to conceive how a population, not exceeding, at that period, four thousand souls, could require seven churches and a cathedral. Three still remain: there is also a chapel for the reformed religion; for all the inhabitants of the *faubourgs* are Protestants, (so D. Mullett stated,) between whom and their Romish brethren a perfectly good understanding has subsisted for centuries past; albeit this

* There is a joint English and French company (Chollet, Diosy, and Morel Fatio) carrying on business in Paris and London as patentees of compressed vegetable aliments; but whether in connection with the firm at Meaux, or communicating with the commissariat, I am not able to state.

was the See long filled by that powerful Defender of the Faith, Bishop Bossuet, whose grave and monument are in the cathedral. Meaux was the first town that submitted to Henry IV., when that monarch was on his way to the siege of Paris, in 1590; and many special privileges were conferred on the Protestants of this district, the value of which is felt even at the present day.

The cathedral amply repaid my visit. The exterior is very defective; great part of the South-west tower never having been built, and many other portions being left in an unfinished state, though four hundred years had elapsed between its first foundation, and the sudden conclusion of the works in the sixteenth century. Among the innumerable statuettes in the Western portal, not a head remained except on one personating the Deity, and on two figures of angels. The iconoclasts had done their hateful work only too effectually. The interior, though small, is magnificent: the old stone has been scraped, and the general aspect resembles that of a recently erected edifice. All that portion, indeed, of the South aisle which is behind the choir has been rebuilt. The columns in the choir are beautiful; and the transepts could hardly be rendered more splendid than they are. Within the choir are six copies of Raphael's cartoons, full size, oil paintings; and two in the South aisle, behind the stalls: a third is in the North aisle, behind the choir. They were presented by Louis XV., and had only been returned eight months previously from Paris, whither they had been sent to be copied in Tapestry at the Gobelins. Two of those copies were in the Rotunda of the Exhibition. These royal gifts are

placed against the columns, in heavy modern frames of a design so inappropriate to Ecclesiastical Architecture, and in such glaring inconsistency with every object around, that, so far from adorning the sanctuary, they tend, in my opinion, to degrade it; as the noble columns are screened from view, and the general effect does not at all compensate for what is thus lost. This wrong, however, is of continual perpetration in foreign churches; the disfiguration in which, through the combined ignorance and *mauvais goût* of the clergy and wardens, might make even angels weep.

Bossuet's statue, (erected in the South aisle, seven and thirty years ago,) representing him seated in a sort of Divinity School Chair, with his right arm extended, and his left hand resting on the arm of the chair, has been considered "a poor concern," and a very inadequate impersonation of one whose flights of impassioned eloquence and lofty spirit, "towering in its pride of place," attached to his name the significant annex of the "Eagle of Meaux." I made a drawing of it; but, as a common-place effigy, it would hardly warrant insertion in these pages.

I felt it interesting, however, thus to stand face to face with this *gentilissima statua*—the counterfeit presentment of a man, whose transcendant genius and abilities had been equally honoured by kings and rulers, and the most learned of his nation. He was the great champion of the Roman Catholic Church*; defending its doctrines, and asserting its claims to ascendancy against all the infidels

* "The greatest doctor that the Church of Rome has produced since the schism of the sixteenth century."—*Macaulay's History of England*.

and Protestants of Europe. His Catechism, "full of all subtlety and mischief," as the adherents of Luther are bound to believe, is, nevertheless, an able and extraordinary form of indoctrination; inculcating, *inter alia*, by implication, if not by positive assertion, that intrusive *dogme de foi*, the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, which is, at the present moment, reviving schism and dispute in the Papal community.*

In one respect, however, he cannot but interest us. It was Bossuet's most zealous wish that the two churches might be united, and that the Sacramental Cup should be extended to the Laity; and, with less orthodoxy than proved politic, he used to affirm that the notion of the Pope's infallibility, and his assumed right to depose kings, ought to be discarded; opinions which cost him a Cardinal's Hat; for his liberalism gave pointed offence to Innocent XI, at a period when that astute pontiff was striving to annihilate the freedom of the French clergy.

At the Episcopal Palace, contiguous to the cathedral, are still shown the library, and avenue of yews, in which the polemical old prelate spent much of his retirement towards the close of his life. D. Mullett said there was a broad staircase in it, constructed after the design of that in the

* The Emperor of Austria, as a token of his personal satisfaction that a Concordat has been concluded with the Papal Chair, has subscribed 250,000 francs as a contribution to the monument which is to be erected on the Piazza di Spagna at Rome, in commemoration of the day on which the Papal See declared the Immaculate Conception to be one of the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church.

Campanile at Venice, which would admit, as I remember, the ascent of a horse without the slightest chance of the animal stumbling.

This was the residence at which the unhappy Louis XVI and his queen and children supped and passed the night, as prisoners of state, on the 24th of June 1791, when on their way from Varennes (where his arrest took place) to Paris. They left at half past six on the morning of the next day ; this being their last halting place on a line of road rendered for ever memorable by their intercepted flight and aggravated sufferings : as I shall take occasion subsequently to record.

There is another monumental effigy in this cathedral : that, in the North aisle, of Philippe de Castile, who died at Briare, on the Loire, in 1627. The details of this statue, the sculpture of which, representing the armour of that age, is exceedingly beautiful, would not interest the general reader. I made an accurate drawing of it ; but it is simply that of a cavalier, bare-headed, kneeling on a cushion. How this statue could have escaped mutilation, not to say utter destruction, is, indeed, inconceivable, when we consider the fury of the insensate multitudes that ravaged the churches and palaces between the year 1789 and 1795. In all probability, it had been secretly removed at the first outbreak of revolutionary tumult, and kept in concealment during several subsequent years. It is as perfect as when it left the atelier of the sculptor.

The population of Meaux is estimated at nine thousand ; and there is manifest activity in the old town, indicating the increase of general business, and sure progress towards more prominent importance. There is a large hospital, a

college, and a training seminary for youths intended for the church. The barracks occupy a prominent station ; but the military annals of this place serve but to remind the traveller of the disastrous reverses of that gallant army which succumbed to the overwhelming myriads of the North, and felt, as defeat succeeded defeat, the near approach of Buonaparte's overthrow. Marmont's and Mortier's divisions were garrisoned here in 1814, but could not maintain their position ; and the retreat of the soldiery, after they had blown up the great magazine, became a panic in which the artillerymen cut the traces of their guns and rode off upon the draught horses. In fact, all my journey to-day lay across the very country, which, forty years before, had been over-run by Prince Blucher's dragoons and Rayefski's Cossacks, Calmucs, and Hulans, whose *hourra*, and revengeful incursions on person and property, hereabouts, are now happily forgotten in the shrill railway-whistle, and every other object within range of sight, at the present day, indicating the advance of civilization and the innumerable improvements effected through nearly half a century of peace ; delighting the sense, and leaving not one sorrowful thought behind.

Returning, therefore, to the station, with my roses and five sketches, I proceeded to visit Ferté-sous-Jouarre, about fourteen miles distant. My sole object was to inspect the celebrated quarries, and gain insight into the texture and composition of those remarkable mill-stones, for which, on account of their excessively high price, purchasers are seldom found besides the English and the Americans. Few of my readers may have entered a mill, and fewer still have inspected the stones ; but any one conversant with the

subject would hear with no slight interest of one entire stone of siliceous cellular rock, measuring six feet eight inches in diameter, eighteen inches in thickness, and four thousand pounds in weight. The most valuable stones are those exhibiting the largest proportion of *pierre moirée*, deep bluish grey mottled with rust-tinted yellow and white. Fragments of this resemble the darkest gun-flints, and admit of many a hard blow from a hammer before a minute particle can be broken off. The neighbourhood abounds with this material, but the district in which it is chiefly found is as unlike a stone quarry as can be conceived; it being to all appearances a sylvan range of picturesque glens, glades, and thickets, more likely to supply work to the pencil and palette than to wedges, beetles, and mattocks. The operations of raising, hewing, and shaping the stones are conducted by a company, entitled the "Société Meulière* des bois de la Barre;" so named from the woodlands overlooking the ruins of the ancient castle on the adjacent isle in the river Marne: and the premises of Monsieur Roger and of M.M. Gaillard and Halbon, where mallets and chisels are ringing from morn till eve, as the last finish is given to the rough cylinders that have been quarried on the adjacent heights, give evidence of the active trade arising from combined capital and increased corn growth, at home and abroad.

Here "the Inquisitive traveller," (in which category, I suppose, Sterne would have classed the writer of these volumes) may witness every stage of the process employed in converting the rugged rough-hewn mass into that

* Meule, a mill-stone.

beautifully smooth wheel-shaped form whose gyrations grind into impalpable powder the finest grain in the universe. Stubborn and seemingly impenetrable as the crude material is, it is, nevertheless, friable, and, unless hewn with due regard to the direction of the stratum is likely to split asunder under final treatment: hence the necessity of long experience on the part of the chief quarrymen in raising the stone, and of the finishers in the town-sheds or enclosures where the article is eventually perfected and prepared for use. The occurrence of many cavities in the surface, (as where small shells abound) compels the workman to lower his level and get rid of the indentations; a process which might occasion large flaws, or shivers, most detrimental to the appearance and efficiency of the stone.

These finishing "hands" can earn ten shillings a day. All the workmen are stationed under open sheds, ranged around a very long yard, on the walls of which rests the continuous roof which shelters them and their tools; and into these yards the trucks are driven that bring the stone in its rough state from the pits. The average size of the stones is somewhere about four feet six inches in diameter, and they are, for the most part, of one entire mass. A very large number, however, are composite; that is, made up in six or seven sections beautifully compacted by cement, after being secured by tenons and dove-tail insertions to which, when the circle is complete, strong iron clamps and hoops impart firmness almost equal to that of one entire stone. Even these secondary grinding implements are highly esteemed, as Ferté-sous-Jouarre productions, on account of the unyielding nature of every

particle of the stone, which does its work most effectually where the machinery is not on an immense scale; but, in the largest mills, where great power is employed, and the concussions are proportionate during very rapid trituration, the entire stones are chiefly preferred; their vast bulk and strength being calculated to sustain the most violent mechanical action; and the wear and tear of fifty years hardly availing to diminish their efficiency.

The afternoon proved rainy; and shower succeeding to shower might well have discouraged any one from encountering the wet clay and grass, and the drip from thousands of trees;—but the thing was to be done; and having taken one of the principal workmen who volunteered his services as a guide, and he having presently afterwards introduced me to his house of entertainment for quarrymen, (alias a wine-shop) for the purpose of borrowing a *blouse à l'ouvrier*, we set out, *minus* umbrellas, till, after two or three furlongs walk, we reached his own cottage on the skirts of a wood, in the hollow of which lay the finest quarry of the whole region. Here his better half came forward, at his cheery summons, with a capacious “gingham,” which, with the aforesaid blue frock, kept my upper man tolerably dry; more so than I should have found myself after two hours’ rain, had I accepted the red and grey petticoat (!) proffered to me at the wine-shop by the occupier’s daughter—for I was now among very primitive people, though at less than fifty miles distance from Paris; and in this make-shift costume, I managed to tramp and flounder about till we reached the brink of the *Carrière d’Espoir*, the name of which I hailed like the old

Romans, as a good omen ; though, considering my yet unfinished journey, I should have preferred dry feet to warm shoulders. I noticed, by the by, at the Cabaret—the wine, or what *we* should designate the *beer*, shop, — (a house hired at about fifteen pounds a year rent,) in which an Englishman would hardly have expected to find anything but a wooden stool, or three-legged chair, to sit upon—a spacious parlour attached to the drinking-room, containing a handsome full-sized mahogany billiard-table. This is a feature in French villages and little bourgs to which our country affords no parallel. Even our neatest wayside inn would regard an old bagatelle-board as an item of aggrandizement. Our abominable beer-shops produce now and then a set of dominoes ; (all gaming with which is forbidden by law)—but our first-rate hotels make no pretensions to the equipment here mentioned, so common in French public-houses, of even the third class, which met my eye on this occasion. We have bowling-greens enough,* but no boards of green cloth for supply of this superior in-door amusement, in the whole range of Great Britain and Ireland's inns.

At length, after many a slide and slip, and (considering that a week was past of the Dog Days) marvellous interruption from the “skiey influences” of wind and rain, we reached the great quarry ; a beautiful spot, indeed, in the centre of a plantation of timber-trees of various ages, overhanging and cresting a hollow or dell of about a hundred yards square, which was skirted by small knolls, bushes, and craggy projections, where the fox-glove and

* Which the French translate into “ Boulingrin !”

iris grew in wild luxuriance. The three enclosing sides of this hollow were about fifty feet deep ; the fourth opened wide into the road penetrating the woods and serving as a causeway for the transport of stone. At the point where the quarry began thus to expand was a little pool, alongside of which stood a mast fitted with a drop-well contrivance for clearing away the water ; and in the immediate contiguity of this lay long heaps of stones collected from the various clefts and cuttings for the purpose of being sold to the paving contractors ; some being of the full size of the carriage-way stones, some only fit for Mac-Adamized roads.

The colour of the soil in which this stone lies is of a dark Roman ochre tint. The interspersed tufts of bright emerald green grass, enamelled with blue, yellow, and orange hues of wild flowers, dotting here and there a mass of subsiding loam, and blending with the moss that had accumulated on some long neglected blocks of old stone too faulty to bear working, composed a scene which might have been anticipated from the forest of Fontainebleau—a ravine in Calabria, or a chine in our own Isle of Wight ; but, assuredly, not from a clay, gravel, and stone, pit ; and but for the incidental appearance, now and then, of a labourer passing by from some adjoining quarry, with his mattock and bag of tools, one might have imagined this to be a spot on the verge of the wilderness, far, far removed from the haunts and occupations of living men. Here, however, as I sate sketching the beautiful features thus brought to view, my intelligent companion, whose hand never relaxed its hold of his better half's umbrella, lest the falling drops should spoil my drawing, assured me some of

the finest stones had been raised, though at present all work was at a stand-still in this particular spot, in consequence of the suit at law pending in Paris on a litigated question of sub-lease and limitation of term. The mill-stones quarried here, since the year 1837, had realized a net profit of nearly six thousand pounds, or about twenty shillings to every working day in the year. In the busiest season there are sometimes a hundred men working at once in a space of the dimensions above mentioned ; but it is rarely that twenty stones of six feet diameter are got out entire in the course of a twelvemonth. I gave several glances à *la géologue* at the strata around me, and then questioned Matthieu concerning the mysteries of his craft and the methods pursued in discovering where it might be exercised to most advantage. The old hands scrutinize with minute inspection the stratum which seems to promise a good cylindrical section, and if, after having ascertained the fact of ample breadth, they discover a thickness not exceeding the bulk which admits of adaptation to the shallow circular shape, they begin to clear around with mallets and wedges in a perpendicular direction, till the exposed surface resembles the butt of a felled tree ; and then the same treatment applied horizontally detaches the stupendous mass from its site, and leaves it in a condition for levers by which it is subsequently transferred to the truck, and drawn down into the town for the finishing.

As I was proceeding along the road which leads to the factories, I noticed, in a green hedge, the mighty stone of whose dimensions I made early mention in the foregoing account. It was perfect, and worth, at least, thirty pounds ;

but it had lain there since the year 1795, and no one had cared to purchase or remove it. It had been bespoken and bought by a spirited corn-dealer, sixty years ago, who came from a considerable distance to possess himself of the best millstone that Ferté-sous-Jouarre could produce ; and this identical stone answered all his expectations, till, just as he was on the point of sending it away, he heard of another sample quarried not far from the spot I had this day visited, the beauty of which he considered so superior to that of the adopted stone, that he relinquished the latter for the more recent production, and here it has remained from that date to the present. I could not ascertain from what part of the world this fastidious connoisseur in *pietra dura* came ; but the narrative savours of an Englishman's proceedings !

The labour is expensive ; but demand and supply are nearly balanced, and the main secret is to quarry deep rather than to widen the excavation and destroy the vegetative loam that lies around, whereon are orchards and even small patches of arable land, fruit and timber trees, underwood, &c.

It is a peculiarly interesting and singular locality. The stone pits of Caen in Calvados lie desolate and dreary in a wide plain ; yet, considering what mighty and magnificent structures have been reared on earth with the material drawn from that subterranean region, a visit to the *Norman* quarries amply requites the tourist for his excursion thither ; but these rocky, yet sylvan, retreats, at Ferté-sous-Jouarre might furnish a modern Ruysdael, or Salvator Rosa, with pictures *ad libitum*, for many a summer season ;

and as I went forward, after this sight of them, to Château Thierry, with a finished drawing and a specimen fragment of the stone, I stepped on to the railway platform with somewhat of that degree of satisfaction in the *fait accompli* which the sportsman, however wet and weary, derives from the possession of a well filled bag of game.

CHAPTER V.

Château Thierry—The river Marne—Remarkable improvements visible in this district after forty years' peace—Unheard-of expedient for securing the carrying of wheat crops upon symptoms of the approach of heavy rain—Employment of soldiers in the harvest works—Tour de Balhan in Château Thierry—Jean de la Fontaine: his eccentricities: wife and son: his house and statue: one of his fables—Madame de Sablière—The castle—An evening with "The Literary Society"—Hôtel Dieu: large picture by Mignard—The Sous-supérieure, and her argument—Interesting interview with Charles Bourcier (a blind tuner) and his wife.

A BLAZE of joyous sunshine having succeeded to the soaking rain that accompanied my researches at Ferté-sous-Jouarre, the ride along the beautiful banks of the Marne, through Nanteuil and Nogent, towards Château Thierry, was delightful indeed. Five and thirty years had fled since I last beheld this delectable spot; for such it must ever be considered; and time had, in the interval, improved everything. The cuttings, levelling, and tunnelling had, of course, changed many of the original features of the district, and I missed the greater part of the old post road; but the thriving trees of 1820 were now become venerable in aspect; the pasture-land had tripled its value, drainage and

irrigation having performed their perfect work ; the corn was sown in drills, instead of being broad cast ; the labourers' cottages exhibited glazed windows, and the farm-houses had been rebuilt in brick ; indubitable evidence, this, of agricultural and social advancement. At Chézy l'Abbaye, I noticed a new incident in rural labour. When the wheat is nearly ripe for the sickle, and apprehensions are felt of coming rain, which might lay the corn,* the reapers are sent into the fields with short sacks attached to their waist-belts, which they fill with ears of wheat ; leaving the full height of the stem standing or prostrate, till opportunity or leisure may enable them to re-enter the field and mow off the long straw. Tilted wagons are brought up to the head of the field to convey the contents of the sacks, when filled, to the barn, where the ears are thrown into the bays to be dried, and in due time subjected to the flail or threshing machine ; and each labourer having cast his sackful of ears into the wagon returns with the emptied sack to the standing crop. It is not a general custom ; but, in districts where the grain ripens early, and the open country bears vast breadths of corn at the mercy of deluging rains, this precautionary picking is of frequent occurrence ; and, considering the value of wheaten grain in so extensive a country as France, the deterioration of the straw thus subjected to trampling is a matter of indifference. Another practice prevails, in the harvest season, (which I think, with Sir Morton Peto, the military authorities in our country might sanction to the immense benefit of the

* There are as many placards affixed to walls and trees and gable-ends of houses in France by the agents of companies undertaking to insure farming-stock in case of fire, and crops, in case of hail, as in our country.

kingdom's population at large)—of employing the soldiers of regiments quartered in the corn-growing localities, to get in the wheat, and work at the same rate of wages, for so doing, with the farm labourers. These apt and active young men of war, in their "fatigue dress," are told off in companies by their sergeants, and take the field in gallant style. There are no disputes, no disorderly acts of unworkmanlike interference with the routine of regularly understood rural labour; but all is done in perfect harmony and cheerfulness;—and the substitution of the sithe and reaping-hook, in the hands of the soldier, for sword or spear, is a timely illustration of the scriptural prophecy, and realizes all our ideas of primitive and patriarchal husbandry.

Our countrymen are rarely heard of in Château Thierry. It lies, certainly, in the direct line to Strasburg; but parties hurrying to Switzerland and the Rhine, without being obliged to take thought for relays of horses, greasing of wheels, and "good beds for travellers," care but little for these little intermediate towns, let ancient or modern chroniclers have written what they may to render them interesting, and to arrest the artist or antiquarian on his way. Nevertheless, Château Thierry is one of the prettiest among the villes de France, and is by no means insignificant in historical reminiscences. There are many roads leading out of it into the country; and each conducts to some charming prospect. That which is enjoyed from the castle walls is one of the most exquisite description of panoramic landscape; and there are few bits of Italian or Sicilian pasturage and cultivated hill-sides preferable to it. Several ancient buildings, also, are still remaining, that

tell of by-gone triumphs or troubles, accordingly as the besiegers or besieged prospered in the conflict of "glorious war." Many a sanguinary struggle was here maintained between the English and the French troops, headed by Joan of Arc, when the fortunes of Charles VII were determined by that heroic maiden's persevering valour and enthusiasm. The scene of these military achievements lay chiefly in the centre of the present town, on the site of the old fort, built in A.D. 1120, by Thibaud the Great; one of the donjon towers of which is still standing, and contains several curious chambers illustrative of the chivalry, superstition, and disquietude of the dark ages; all of which I inspected in company with a Monsieur Harmand, Keeper of the Wills, who seemed as proud of the Tour de Ballhan, and all the records of the bellicose Dukes of Burgundy, the Chevalier du Guet,* and Queen Blanche, mother of St. Louis, as if he had been grand-chamberlain of Windsor Castle itself, and cicerone to all its curiosities.

To my taste, however, the souvenirs of an old acquaintance introduced to me in the eighth year of the present century, in the person of Monsieur de la Fontaine, who has certainly lived in his volume of fables through many a generation of French scholars, supplied the most interesting object of this day's ramble through the high-ways and by-ways of Château Thierry. In the street once called "Rue des Cordeliers," but now "de la Fontaine," is the house occupied during several years of his most eventful life by this Æsop of France; one of the most original geniuses of the age of Louis XIV, though that originality was charac-

* Officer of the night-watch maintained in this old tower.

terized by inconsistencies and singularities that made his life's history a metaphysical paradox. He was, as it were, a mere boy from the nursery to the grave. Artless, credulous, pliant, without a particle of pride or ambition, wholly indifferent to wealth, incapable of lasting attachment to any one object, a continual seeker of amusement rather than of pleasure, and actuated less by moral restraints, than by natural law, he was in appearance, only, a man : he lived and died a child. Fontaine was born at Château Thierry, in the year 1621, and is said to have received the first rudiments of education at Rheims, and then entered on a course of training for holy orders ; but having, at the age of two and twenty, been particularly impressed by the recital of an ode of Malherbe's composition, he himself began to indulge a taste for poetry and light literature in general, and relinquished all thoughts of ordination. A few years afterwards, at the earnest suggestion of his parents, and certainly not *proprio motu*, he married a young lady of Ferté Milon, whom he is said to have liked well enough, though he left her, at no very remote period from the date of their union, to go and reside in Paris, where he became a pensioner under the then minister of state, Fouquet. At the death of Fouquet, he became a gentleman-in-waiting in the suite of our Henrietta, Queen of Charles I., and at her decease found protection from other personages of distinction, till his best friend, Madame de Sablière, took him into her house, and freed him from the domestic cares for which he was so utterly ill-suited. He lived under her roof for twenty years, and when she departed this life in a lunatic asylum, he received a pressing invitation from that epicurean wit, St. Evremond,

(then naturalized in our country as a 'pet friend' of the Stuarts) to come over to England: but his total ignorance of the language he would be required to learn, and his ardent love of Parisian society, dissuaded him from acting on the said offer, and he became an inmate in the home of Monsieur D'Hervart, and there died, and made a Christian end—the result of a very dangerous illness, in which he bitterly repented of every line, which, dying, he would wish to blot, and gave several satisfactory proofs of his sincerity. During his long residence in the capital, he made occasional excursions to Château Thierry, where his wife, who never deplored his absence, dwelt in the very mansion I this day visited. At these periods, he invariably sold some portions of his landed estate, which, under the influence of his own and his partner's improvidence, dwindled down to very limited dimensions. She had borne to him an only child, a son, whose lineal descendants are still living in France, though not at Château Thierry; and this son was very humanely educated by the then Archbishop of Paris, and eventually provided for by the same benefactor. Some idea may be formed of the simplicity and unfeeling *insouciance* of his father from the circumstance of his hearing this young man conversing with good sense and acumen at the house of a mutual friend, and upon Fontaine's expressing a wish to know who the speaker was, and being informed it was his son, he quietly observed: "Ah! I am glad of it:"—and said no more. This was the ludicrous weakness or imbecility which induced Madame de Sablière to treat him with such benevolence; though that lady looked upon him almost in the light of a pet spaniel, in her *salons*; for, on some occasion which arose, of dis-

charging her whole establishment, she briefly addressed them thus : "I am about to part with you all, and shall retain only my three pet animals, my dog, my cat, and La Fontaine."

In the kindred arts of story-telling and fable writing, the peculiarity of this man's genius rendered him inimitable ; insomuch that D'Alembert spoke of him as the writer whom it would cost Nature most pains to reproduce. On the grounds, therefore, of this acquaintance with so many of the incidents of Fontaine's life, I paid an early visit to the premises he once occupied as his own. They are now the property of Monsieur Tribert de Sept Mons, whose tenant M. Baron Adam, a small landed proprietor resides in the old house, and received me very courteously ; bringing out a portable round table on which I deposited



my drawing implements (while completing a sketch of the building), and then going in to pacify his cook, who was in a high quarrel with some one of the household, about the *potage* which had boiled over ! The pristine owner of the parlours and kitchens would have availed himself of her amusing wrath to construct a very edifying fable !

The court-yard gate, on the street side, is of handsome appearance ; and on the entablature, below the pediment that decorates it, is an inscription in gilt letters to this effect :

MAISON DE JEAN DE LA FONTAINE.

The house is of large dimensions, with very extensive offices on either side : I should say, ten times too capacious and stately for so simple mannered an occupant as the author of the Fable Book, whose epitaph, his own composition, ran thus :

(Jean s'en alla comme il était venu, &c.)

As John came upon this scene, so he made his retreat—
 His capital and income he contriv'd at once to eat ;
 As for riches, he consider'd them a thing of little use ;
 And Time itself he portion'd in his own peculiar views :
 For he made of it two parts, which to bear on Life he brought ;—
 One in slumbering and sleepy fits—and one in doing nought !

Nevertheless, all France combined to honour this man's memory. Her best artists painted his portrait again and again ; and illustrated his writings with some of the finest

productions of the pencil and the burin: Louis XIV granted to his descendants an exemption from all rates and taxes; a privilege such as had never before been conferred on genius:—Louis XVI caused his statue to be erected in Paris; and Louis XVIII followed his relative's example, giving an order to Laitié, the sculptor, whose work stands at this moment on the Levée, a public walk close to the bridge, occupying the position where, in February, 1814, the Russian soldiery were destroyed in masses by the artillery planted on the castle heights. I made a drawing of this statue, which represents the poet at the age of six or eight and thirty, in the costume of the seventeenth century, holding in his left hand a paper; in his right a pen; as if on the point of handing down to posterity some choice witty words,

“To point a moral, or adorn a tale.”

It struck me as being undersized, and wanting greater elevation. There is another at Laon, besides one in the long gallery at Versailles.

It would have been well for himself and for many, had Fontaine confined his literary performances to subjects as entirely inoffensive as the fables translated from *Æsop* and *Phædrus* by his ready pen. This, he, too, lived to feel; and, in the moments of remorse, destroyed a manuscript of vicious tendency, for which he was to have received a considerable sum; he, also, set to work on a versification of the Hymns (!) of the Church; a tame production, long since forgotten, if not extinct. In order, however, that my readers may be enabled to form a tolerably accurate

conception of the style which had created so great popularity in that age, I here annex my translation of a fable, which, for aught I know to the contrary, may be *of his own invention*; and which was dedicated, two years previous to his death, to the Duke of Burgundy, (grandson of "Le grand Monarque,") then only eleven years of age. The poet had entered his seventy-fourth.

THE CAT AND THE TWO SPARROWS.

("Un chat, contemporain d'un fort jeune moineau.")

A CAT and sparrow, both extremely young,
 From infant days had to each other clung,
 And under one snug roof were glad to share
 In cage and basket their protectors' care.
 Puss many a time by this young bird was teaz'd,
 And kindly let her peck him as she pleas'd;
 And if, on some occasions, he found cause
 To hint a just displeasure with his paws,
 All fierceness he was careful to restrain,
 And the claws' points, still sheath'd, would give no pain.

Less circumspect, by far, the sparrow's beak
 With many a peck her humour would bespeak;
 But Master Cat those little pranks o'erlook'd,
 And like a prudent sage such outrage brook'd,
 With true discretion thinking that no friend
 The ties of ancient love should lightly rend;
 The more so that from earliest youth these two
 Had lived in peace, and each the other knew,
 Till, from long custom, both alike forbore,
 And no dispute had led to downright war.

At length, a sparrow from th' adjacent glade
 To our two friends a sudden visit paid :
 Pierrot, our bird—just like some spoilt young child—
 And graver Raton (so our cat was styl'd)
 The stranger welcom'd ; but, as feuds arose, '
 The sparrows soon became determin'd foes,
 And Raton join'd in war : " How now !" says he,
 " My chum's insulted ! This must never be :
 Our neighbour's sparrow to devour mine
 Shall I permit, with these pretensions fine ?
 No, no ! not so ; by all my tribe I swear—"'
 And, rushing on the fierce contending pair,
 He gobbled up the stranger in a trice :
 Then, as he lick'd his lips, he adds " How nice !
 How tender is a sparrow's flesh !"—a thought
 With fatal issue to his comrade fraught,—
 For, without pity, grace, or more ado,
 He kills and eats. the other sparrow, too !

What moral from this fact can I infer ?
 For, without *that*, all Fable worthless were.
 Methinks I see some lineaments of Truth,
 But only through a mist : You, gentle youth !
 My Prince, may possibly, at once have seen
 The sev'ral points, and fathom'd all they mean :
 Such sports delight you ; but my duller Muse
 All this sharp recreative wit eschews ;
 For, howsoever to their votary kind,
 She and her sisters have not all your mind.

The drift and application of this fable are not very apparent. It may be inferred that we should be careful in permitting strangers to intermeddle with our domestic joys ; and the merest accidents may initiate us in know-

ledge, and prompt suggestions, to which our nature may only too readily respond : but,

“ *Davus sum, non Ædipus* ”—

and I shall best recreate and interest the reader by leaving him to exercise the powers of penetration attributed so complimentarily to the young Duke, the pupil of Fénélon, for whom that venerable prelate wrote his “*Télémaque*.” It appears he was really an excellent youth, endued with the highest intellectual abilities ; but destined to premature departure from this sublunary scene, as he died at the age of thirty, the object of universal and justly merited regret.

I would earnestly advise all travellers halting for only a few hours, even, at Château Thierry, to ascend the eminence on which the decaying walls, battlements and towers of ancient days, and the fortifications of recent date, now dismantled and broken up, occupy so extensive a space. The castle hill was, in fact, a strong position, so early as the eighth century. The main gate of entry still stands in solid masonry, and is picturesque enough. It is a remnant of the middle ages, and must have been erected by no ordinary builders. I paced the principal chamber, and found it fifty-six feet across, from front to back. The whole town might be laid in ruins by a cannonade from these heights ; and shot was poured, like hail, on the Russians, down the main street, terminating at the bridge, as they formed in column to pass the river in February, 1814 ; but the French garrison could not long hold out against the numberless legions of the Allies then marching on

Paris ; and though Napoleon himself dictated bulletins of victory from the battle-field of Château Thierry, this position was presently evacuated : the grassy mounds and embrasures, through which the well-served ordnance of the imperial army dealt death to hundreds at every discharge, among the ranks of the invading and avenging enemy, are now so many crumbling hillocks ; and the mouldering walls, once redoubtable with loop-holed towers and ancient calivers, arquebuses and cross-bows, or with that deadlier arm of modern artillery, which the cannoniers of menaced France, above all other combatants, knew how to wield, are now trellissed with vines, and converted into shady walks for the townspeople, who hence look across the beautiful plains, encircled by hills and slopes of the most fascinating variety of rural picture ; cultivation, in all directions, decking the soil with ornament and abundance ; and agricultural industry exercising its happiest influences on the blended arable and pasture lands. Here the winding Marne and the more direct line of rail are seen marking out the great causeway between Paris and Strasbourg, and communicating activity to every farm, village, and market in its course. The inhabitants delight in this peaceful appropriation of the antique citadel, and resort to it as a favourite promenade. "See," said they, "our Arcadia ! we might call yonder valleys the Tempe of the Marne !" and, of a truth, there seemed to be health, wealth, and happiness in those golden fields which the Lord of the harvest had so signally blest, and which lay glowing in sunshine and plenty ; and these are glances which the heart and eye remember with equal fidelity. The actual prosperity and contentment of the inhabitants of

this thriving district, contrasted with the sufferings of their forefathers, and the trouble of evil days on which France had for so long a period fallen, create a sense of thankfulness which it is luxury even for a pilgrim and a stranger to feel, and the duty of a tourist to acknowledge.

Monsieur Harmand, with whom I became acquainted very soon after my arrival at Château Thierry, expressed his wish to introduce me to his intimate friend, Monsieur Souillac, a corresponding member of the Archæological Society of Paris, at whose residence on the Route de Nesles, I should have an opportunity of looking over some very rare and interesting prints, illustrative of the earliest periods of the little town's history; and where, if I would do him the pleasure of spending the evening, I should meet some highly intelligent and agreeable members of their Literary Society; an invitation which I readily accepted, and to the *agréments* of which my memory recurs with many pleasing reminiscences.

The sociability and friendliness of these amiable men, (and how many such are to be found if we would but seek them more than we do!) constituted a most agreeable incident in my brief sojourn at Château Thierry. They seemed to be sanguine in their hopes of enlarging the circle of science in the Department, and of seeing extensive benefits accrue to the town from the passage of the Strasbourg line, which had already given to it a new existence, as it were. The march of improvement, they said, was indicated by no doubtful traces; and such impulsive energies had at length been infused among their population (of five thousand souls) as bade fair to place Château Thierry, at no very remote period, on a footing of equality with Laon or

Soissons. There is no staple trade in any one of these places ; and I did not very clearly perceive by what process the onward course of their prosperity was to reach such eminence : but, emulation—the right principle—was at work ; and their increased facilities of communication with the capital, the fountain-head of Knowledge and Commerce, would, doubtless, prove as valuable to the proprietors of land, as to the cultivators of Science and Art, in this little community. The Corn Marts, and the Libraries, were “all before them where to choose ;”—and, as I told them, where there was a will, there would never be wanting a way. Monsieur Souillac said they now had both, and felt the strength of their new position : they had already become wiser, busier, and richer men ! “This tune goes manly ;” and may be regarded, *par parenthèse*, as an echo of the sentiment now generally prevalent in France.

On the morning of the next day, I was induced to visit the Hôtel Dieu, or Hospital, for the particular purpose of viewing a highly valued picture, reputed to be the work of Louis XIV’s court painter, Mignard. It represents the Founders of this charitable institution, in four stately figures, male and female. The composition is rich and elegant, and the colouring harmonious ; but the fancy draperies of that age, however elegantly disposed, and the periwigs and peruques of lords and ladies, seated in attitude, could hardly fail to overpower the artist ; and, even on a canvas of ten feet by eight, leave him at grievous disadvantage in any attempts to infuse spirit and expression. Mignard was defective in both ; and, like Lely, fell far short of Vandyck, whose more perfect knowledge of *chiaroscuro*, and happier arrangement, made all his portraits life-like, and all his

groupings real. The hands in this picture are finished with particular exactness and delicacy ; and there are two spaniels, in the foreground, beautifully executed. I entreated the Sous-Supérieure, or feminine Vice-Principal, who accompanied me on this occasion, to get the picture lined. It was bagging in its frame for want of due tension ; and though it had been painted upwards of a hundred and seventy years ago, it had not been varnished since the decease of Louis XV. The old nuns and their confessors would, I fear, do nothing in the matter ; and to this liaison of contented ignorance the *chef-d'œuvre*, as they term it, will probably owe its rapid decay before the close of the present century.

The said Religieuse, by the bye, whose brother, she gave me to understand, is the Incumbent of Fontainebleau, led me into a lively argument about St. Peter *et quibusdam aliis* ; and was outraged by my saying it was not absolutely certain, though highly probable, that that Apostle was ever at Rome. She marvelled at the "flat blasphemy" of doubting the fact, when the Romans were actually the guardians of his tomb ! Shaking my Oxonian head at her illogical deductions, I cautioned her against thinking of men above that which is written ; but she came out in such full force on tradition and the Fathers, that I felt "the better part of valour" would be to return to the picture and its needs ; and having done this, and inspected the sick wards, and a venerable grey tower of the ancient castle which now forms an angle in the garden of the hospital, I took my gentle leave. Poor soul ! In all probability she was not sorry to be rid of so *exigeant* a connoisseur, and so audacious an heretic !

Shortly after this visit to the hospital, I went, by appointment, to call upon a very interesting young man, Charles Bourcier, who had been mentioned to me overnight by some of my new literary acquaintances, as a most interesting subject among the class on whose behalf my sympathies are continually awakened. He was born blind: was now twenty-five years of age, married, and earning a comfortable subsistence as a pianoforte-tuner. I found him at home, though he was to have been, at the time, at Meaux; but some engagement in the neighbourhood had detained him. His features struck me as being remarkably handsome, and there was a vivid intellectual expression of countenance which it was impossible to contemplate without feeling interested in his history and fate. A more lively and agreeable young man I have seldom met. The blind, in general, are a study, if thoughtfully considered. We step, for a time, out of our world into theirs; and, for the most part, they send us back in a thinking mood. They meditate and reason with greater concentration and individuality of purpose than the seeing; and zeal and diligence may be noticed as their special characteristics. The self-consciousness of power gives, in many a case, a high tone to their feelings; and the peculiar keenness and sensibility of mind with which they dwell on the theme of their difficulties, successes, and joys, troubles, hopes and doubts, render all such interviews and opportunities of discourse as I enjoyed, on this occasion, unlike ordinary converse with our fellow men. Charles Bourcier was born at Soissons; and after being carefully instructed in the first rudiments of a general education was placed, when thirteen years old, at a public school or college in Paris—

the semi-military uniform of which he wore when I saw him. In common with the majority of blind subjects, he had early imbibed a taste for music; and having a very correct ear had turned it, within the last five years, to profitable account, by establishing his connections, far and near, as a tuner. In pursuing this avocation he would travel from town to town, mostly on foot, without a guide; and even went up to Paris, where he invariably found more engagements than he could fulfil, at piano-factories, schools and private houses.

It was delightful to observe his hilarity and contented spirit; and his language, on any subject I introduced, was that of a deep and correct thinker, and of a carefully educated student. He considered his condition of darkness in no respect one of difficulty or hardness. He had been tutored and trained as if he had enjoyed perfect vision; and, among other accomplishments, had been taught by a fellow blind pupil to *dance*. I should have been much amused to see a quadrille performed by the blind! I knew a deaf and dumb gentleman who danced much better than many do who hear;—his ability to do this arising from the sense of vibration which he said was communicated to the floor boards from the legs of the piano, the pedestal of the harp, and the broad extremity, touching the ground, of a double-bass:—the pulsations on the soles of his feet, from those instruments, serving as a rhythm which indicated to him the measures of the dance. If eight blind persons could go through a *côtillon* without frequent collision, it would be an extraordinary spectacle, indeed.

Observing his wife seated at a table near me, occupied in

dress-making, I enquired how it had come to pass that they had entered together the holy state of matrimony. It had been brought about, he said, by their dear friend and pastor, Monsieur Husson, of Château Thierry, who, when he found his present wife bent upon taking the veil, and immuring herself during the remainder of her existence in a cloister, suggested to her the possibility of her making a worthier use of time and a good disposition by encouraging the addresses of an amiable young man, a friend of his, who, though without vision, was endowed with many excellent graces, and possessed the elements of domestic happiness, as a quiet home-keeping subject, and a devoted and true friend. The idea of such peculiar companionship and attachment impressed her mind strongly; she augured good from such a choice, and, relying on her spiritual adviser's rectitude and judgment, consented to be introduced, became his friend and confidante, and, in less than ten days after this perfectly good understanding, gave him her hand and heart at the altar. She remarked to me that he was far superior in mind and attainments to any individual of the class into which, had she been inclined to change her state, she must have married; that she was proud of him as a man of high intelligence, and fond of him for his sweet disposition and single-minded sincerity; and she was never happier than when at his side—a helpmate, indeed. His relations had assured him, that marry whom he might, his wife would leave him for many a long hour and day in solitude; and deprecated his hazarding such an issue;—"but," said he, "no woman would link her destinies with a blind man on light grounds. Devotedness must alone induce her to make such an election, and

would ever make her regard him as the exclusive object of her thoughts, care, and affection." To which she added—"How could I neglect such a person as that! I hardly regard him as a sightless companion!"

He smiled, and remarked aside to me, "We blind are by no means so blind as people suppose. Our ears act frequently as eyes: our faculties are so sharp, that we receive impressions more rapidly than you who see with distraction, and amidst operations of sense which demand what may be called a distributed activity." His calculations of distance, and heightened sensibility of hearing, as well as of touch, were astonishing. By way of test, I asked him if he could form a tolerably accurate estimate of my age. He guessed it within two years. His wife erred, in *her* computation, by seventeen. She had trusted to her eyes only; he to his ears, which informed him far more truthfully. "How is this?" said I. "I judge," he replied, "by the tones of your voice, by your manner of enunciation, and by the tenor of your discourse. This judgment is in constant exercise, and without it we should be often under delusion, and feel isolated indeed." At my particular request, he showed me how he managed to use a knife and fork; and it was manifest that, let what might be put into a plate before him, he would never make his blindness perceptible by inaptitude or awkwardness at the dinner-table. "No;" said his wife, "he is very independent, and can render me great help in getting our meals ready: and when I am obliged to go out in the forenoon on business, and he happens to be disengaged, and able to stay at home, he cooks the whole of our dinner!"

Altogether, my interview proved highly interesting. He was, as I had been given to understand, no common man; and I think the little devotee, with their infant daughter at her side, evinced good judgment in abandoning the cloister for a nursery, and the Ursuline veil for a plain gold ring.

CHAPTER VI.

Epernay—Mons. Moët's two superb town mansions, and his cellars—The processes of Champagne wine-making—The disease in vines; how manifesting itself—Madame Clicquot—Rheims—Its magnificent cathedral—Cardinal Archbishop Gossuet—Charles VII.—Jeanne D'Arc—Wonderful copy, in Gobelins tapestry, of two of the cartoons of Raffaele—The incomparable rose-window in the Western façade—Sarcophagus of Jovinus—The organ and congregation.

I LEFT Château Thierry, at a quarter past three in the afternoon, for Epernay; pursuing my journey through the delightful valley of the Marne. The plain on either side of the river displayed an immense extent of rich arable land, cropped exclusively with wheat, barley, oats and potatoes; but at the point where this perfectly flat surface begins to rise and form a gradual inclination upward, till the slope forms itself into a hill of considerable altitude, the corn crops become smaller and less frequent; and parti-coloured breadths of clover, tares, sainfoin, lucerne, mustard and poppies tint the brilliant hill-sides with bronze, amber, emerald and lilac hues, to which the chequers of the most highly variegated Scotch plaid bear the nearest resemblance.

The infinitesimal compartments of Parcellement Farming show at this distance in a miniature scale of husbandry, which to our English eye is almost ludicrous. I counted six different crops in an acre and a half of ground! Still those ever varying tints, and the aspect of twenty miles' length of hills, beautiful in outline and colouring, and cultivated nearly to their very summits, for grain and vegetables, fruit and forage, render this district the fairest spot, by far, in all Champagne whose—

“ ——— vine, too, here, her curling tendril shoots,
Hangs out her clusters, glowing to the South,
And scarcely wishes for a warmer sky.”

Indeed, by the time we reached Dormans, the grape had fully asserted its rank and importance, and stood forth dominant above all other growth, in the white *hectares* of this chalky, but highly remunerative, soil. The very mention of Epernay was suggestive of that

“ Good familiar creature if it be well used—”

creaming Champagne wine; and, though the topic of its growth and manufacture has been exhausted, and every detail of the vintage, crushing, and fermentation, bottling and disgorging, sweetening, colouring and brandying, stringing, wiring, and papering, has been recapitulated too often and too well to render any report from my own observation either needful or interesting, I made a point of paying my respects to the cellars of Monsieur Moët, whose name I had so often seen making such rapid aerial ascents at the extremity of his released corks; and after

exploring the subterranean saloons and cloisters, sacred to Bacchus and bottles, it would be interesting to see how this great embellisher and "whip" of our social feasts was himself lodged; and where, while nestling in his own palatial home, he had thrown open the gates of another, equally luxurious and extensive, to Napoleon I., who was lodged in it on the eve of the battle of Montmirail, and of the defeat of Blucher, in 1814.

Monsieur Moet's splendid residence is situate on one side of the principal street of Epernay; and exactly opposite to it is its counterpart, which forty-three years ago received the then Emperor of France and all his suite. Both mansions are the reflex of the soil they stand upon; for they are *one white*. No model in *biscuit* or Bristol card-board could be more destitute of colour: but this is the prevalent taste in France, and the *exteriors*, at least, look clean and wholesome. I counted in Monsieur Moet's own special flower-garden upwards of ninety orange-trees, surrounding the piece of water between the greenhouse and court-yard; the latter area reminding me of that in front of the Euston Square Hotel. The mayor of Epernay is building a magnificent mansion in red brick and white cut stone, in the style of Francis I., in the immediate contiguity of Monsieur Moet's premises, whence he and his neighbour command an uninterrupted view of the champagne country, whose produce fills the town and environs with widely increasing wealth, and all the equipments and ostentation of *nouveau riche* luxuriousness.

The railway station is very large; displaying two wide rotundas: and I was surprised to find such spacious and handsome streets, and a population exceeding six thousand,

in a locality where little or no business seems to be prominent, except in connection with the monopoly of wine growths; though there is a steady trade in earthenware, made from the clay-pits of Montigny. There are actually large firms for the sale of *corks* only. Xatart and Gorgot, in the principal square, have immense dealings in this article; exceeding, it was said, seventy-five thousand francs (£3000) yearly.

Madame Clicquot's château de Bourceau, opposite to Damery, is literally a castle in the air; for it stands on the extreme summit of a considerable eminence, rising so abruptly from the line of rail, and elevated at such a perpendicular height, as to require no little outstretching of the head and shoulders from a carriage window to gain a view of it. The style of this costly edifice of brilliant white stone is imitative of some of the most ornate specimens of the middle ages, castellated and turreted *con amore*; and the natives admire it as a first rate sample of modern building; but it is painfully new, (being but five years of age) and *parvenu*; and requires the "toning down" of, at least, two centuries. Through the telescope in this lady millionaire's drawing-room she may espy the hills of Dormans, and Haut Villiers, the ruins of Château Châtillon, and the ripening clusters of thrice famous Aï; a name far too familiar to the lovers of *Vins mousseux* to need particularization or eulogium here. Madame lives in a very atmosphere of vineyards, and thereout hath sucked no small advantage in a bibulous and love-making generation; for her fortune is estimated to be quadruple of Monsieur Moët's, and her daughters are the wives of wealthy men of title. "Wine, wine, wine, rosy wine!" is

the genius *loci*; and if all the hedge timber we saw between Port à Binson and Epernay, had been cork-trees, it would only have been in keeping with the general features and *prestige* of the neighbourhood.

The cellar-men on Monsieur Moët's premises were extremely civil and obliging. He employs about two-hundred work-people all through the year, of which number thirty are boys, and twelve women. These women do the whole work of tin-foiling the corks after the final wire-fastening; and wrap up the bottles in paper, as we see them when we open the cases. One of the chief overlookers took a lighted candle, and placed another in my hand, and proceeded to conduct me, at my request, through the principal cellars which are about fifty feet below the level of the street. He said the stock in hand was regularly kept up to a total of three millions of bottles; (upwards of five thousand pipes) portioned off into growths of various years and qualities.* Among the first stacks or frames for holding bottles, called "*lattes*," (from the *laths* used in their construction),† I saw one in what is designated "*Le grand Berceau*," containing twenty thousand bottles of wine, from the vineyards of Aï, of the unparalleled vintage of the year 1842. These bottles were so encrusted with mildew and cob-web as to be hardly recognizable as the long-necked vessel of "jest and youthful

* In the cellars of Barclay, Perkins and Co. are no less than 116 huge vats, containing beer in a condition for use. These average 2,000 barrels of 36 gallons each, and the largest contains 3,400 barrels; so that there are always 232,000 barrels of beer on hand!

† There are smaller frames called "*Tabletas*," holding nine dozen bottles.

jollity," with which the world is familiar; and none but the wine of that memorable year would have continued sound through so long a period.

Not but that the ventilation of the cellars is most carefully and scientifically regulated; and though there was a very perceptible sensation of wine-scented damp, and positive wet under foot, the temperature was even, and below fifty degrees. The moisture proceeded from drippings at the wall-sides and apex of the vault, and, in many instances, from the bursting of bottles. I saw grooves for conducting into tanks any overflow from this latter circumstance. Not far from the Grand Berceau was a high vaulted chamber, containing seven vast tuns which held from two thousand three hundred, to three thousand one hundred gallons, one with another. These are kept filled every year till bottling time. Alongside of these monster casks were eight men occupied in the operation of corking. The cork being taken out of hot water, for which a little steaming apparatus is kept close at hand, comes to the "chantier" (or iron framed machine for driving it into the bottle) in a very soft and supple state. It is exactly two inches long and one and a quarter in diameter, and in less than a second of time after it is submitted to the grip and squeeze of the chantier and its mallet, it descends into the neck of the bottle, and is ready for the string and first wiring. The men I saw on this occasion were engaged on these three operations alone; for the tin-foil and wrapper would not be in requisition till the last corking and wiring had taken place.

I then entered a very long vault, one hundred and twenty-five feet in length, twenty-five in width, and sixteen

in height, resembling a dark covered cloister in some old abbey. Here were a hundred and fifty thousand bottles placed slantingly through elongated holes in the shelves of the framework containing them, so as to lie in an angular position which would cause all feculent matter to leave their bottoms and the sides, and gradually deposit itself in their necks.

The man whom I found here was going his rounds to give each of the bottles under his charge a smart shake from left to right and back again. This he did by an inconceivably rapid action of his right wrist, after which he replaced the bottle ; marking it with white, and raising it a little higher than when he drew it out. This was to be done twice a day for four, five, or six weeks, accordingly as the sediment might be found passing from the sides to the neck of the bottle ; for, once deposited there, the “disgorging” process would become necessary ; that is, the string would be cut and the cork expelled, and a couple of glasses of liquor be permitted to escape with it, carrying off the said deposit, on the riddance of which the bottle is dexterously raised by the hand of the disgorger, and prevented discharging any more liquor ; but is filled, immediately, to the full extent of the quantity just released, from a bottle of pure wine standing alongside. This operation takes place three times, at least, before the liquor is fit for final sweetening, corking, stringing, tin-foiling and papering. I witnessed the shaking on this occasion, as I have just said, at Epernay ; and the remaining processes at Rheims.

The manner in which this shake is given is very peculiar. The bottle being twelve inches and a half in circum-

ference keeps the four fingers and thumb in full stretch, when grasping it at its extreme broad end; and if the shaker were to agitate his elbow in the movement, as I did mine, when I tried to imitate him, he would find his arm disabled before he had handled fifty. The vibration is produced by the wrist exclusively; and fifteen thousand are thus treated in the course of nine hours.

After this, I went into another vault containing a hundred and ninety thousand bottles. They were packed in stack-frames (*lattes*) five feet three inches high, containing fourteen rows; sixty-five necks and sixty-six bottoms being visible in each front row. The two stacks from which I took these measurements contained three thousand seven hundred and fifty-two bottles; and the lateral view exhibited such compact arrangement and close contact as to render it a matter of difficulty to insert a slender lead-pencil between bottle and bottle.

Many of the passages leading into these noble vaults, which are well lighted by embrasures or diagonally descending apertures, and ventilated by air shafts like narrow wells, were cut out of solid chalk; but the main cellars were built up in excellent masonry. A sub-acid, vinous, sickly odour prevailed throughout, which, even had the weather been sultry, and my throat dry, would have deterred me from tasting any of the treasure heaped up in these cavernous regions: but the curiosities and mysteries of such a vast dépôt, which Jaqueson's at Chalons alone surpasses, are one of those "strange things" which, it is said, travellers live to see; and here, moreover, they may learn, that, as in the case of watch-making, the number of manipulations or handlings, which every pint and a half of

Champagne wine undergoes before it finds its way to our dinner tables, exceeds, at the lowest estimation, a hundred and fifty !

I could add a few particulars to what I have already stated, but shall reserve them till occasion arises for reverting to the subject under the head of RHEIMS, where a lucky incident enabled me to gain still closer insight into the mysteries of making this favourite wine, and more accurate knowledge of the causes of its many varieties.



EPERNAY must be a dirty town to walk through in wet and wintry weather ; for the slightest shower of rain sets up a slimy surface of white mud, which clings to the foot and bespatters one's clothing as if in a lime-pit. It is not, however, at all devoid of interest. The forefathers of the

present generation had to contend with troublous times and fierce invaders ; and their great ancestors, at the close of the sixteenth century, compelled Henry the Fourth's army to abide in their trenches till the besiegers were in a worse plight than the besieged. The town yielded at last, however, after the most gallant resistance their enemy had ever encountered. The Place de la Gendarmerie is a singularly picturesque quarter ; a sketch of which, malgré the drizzling rain, I managed to add to my collection, and have annexed in the preceding page.

The residences, however, of the principal merchants are situate in a different quarter of the town, and may be termed almost palatial ; indicating enormous profits from their peculiar trade in effervescence, and that "invisible spirit,"* whereon Michael Cassio bestowed a name for which they owe no thanks to him, moralize he never so wisely !

The journey into which I had portioned out the remainder of the afternoon traversed fields of vast extent covered with vines a yard high, trained to slender sticks ; sometimes on a dead level of upwards of two miles' length ; sometimes on the slopes of undulating hollows and valleys, till some dense woods would interpose, and limit the grape growth to a mile's breadth on either side of the road. The sub-soil was calcareous, or rather what might be termed chalk-marl, covered with about a foot's depth of pale loam intermixed with vast quantities of limestone. On enquiry, I found that the chalk-marl was in no respects unfriendly to the valuable plant above. As in our Kentish wheat lands,

* Shakspeare, " Othello," Act II. s. 3.

it absorbed all redundant moisture, and corrected all acidity in the superincumbent loam. The roots of the vines begin to spread in a horizontal direction when they touch the chalk, and adhere in their growth to the top soil. This scanty surface would be most detrimentally reduced by autumnal and winter rains, but for large quantities of fresh mould being brought on to the land, intermixed with thousands of tons' weight of leaves collected from the woods above mentioned; and this mixture of putrescent and calcareous manure strengthens the stem, cherishes the roots, and counteracts any evil attaching to the shallowness of the earth from which they draw sustenance. It does not appear that the system, adopted of late years on the Rhine, of substituting the prunings of the vines for manure, brought at great expense from farm-yards and towns, has been attempted here. From Bonn to Mayence the branches of the vines, immediately they are pruned in July and August, are now cut into small pieces and mingled with the soil, where their decomposition is so soon effected that at the end of a few weeks no traces of them can be found. This has secured fertility to the German vineyards; but in every research I made on three several visits to the banks of the Rhine, I found the vines growing in whitish sandy earth, abounding in silex and limestone, and of considerable depth; a condition and quality of soil upon which the fertilizing matter withdrawn from it in the leaves, tendrils, and branches, would, upon restoration to whence it came, act with decisive benefit; but such top dressing would not suit the Champagne district, where great vigilance is exercised in maintaining the surface soil at a regular depth of adequately nourishing mould; seeing

that death to the plant must ensue, if, upon reaching the chalk and rubble-like matter below, the roots be left destitute of genial vegetative matter, above, sufficient to cherish their growth, and transmit upwards the vital sap on which all promise of fruit essentially depends. Accordingly, after heavy rain the vine-dressers may be seen earthing up the plants from new supplies conveyed in wagons to the vineyard, carefully treading it down, and intermixing leaf-mould from the spacious pits in the immediate vicinity. This labour and the continual weeding and watching, at all seasons, entails heavy expense; insomuch that every acre involves a yearly outlay of twelve pounds; and this, too, with the concomitant risk, as in our hop cultivation, of the loss of a whole crop from excessive rain, hail, frost, blight and vermin; to say nothing of the disease, which, like that of the potato plant, is becoming only too frequent a visitor. The Epernay district had already begun to exhibit indications of its approach; but the Burgundian grape was intact.* When at Clos Vougeot, I requested the chief vine-dresser to point out to me the death symptoms in the vine. He said that happily there was not a case within reach; but, gathering a leaf, he explained that the earliest and surest indication of this plague in the vegetable kingdom, was a morbid condition of the stem of the leaf. If affected, it would exhibit two or three changes of colour: pale-yellow, then rusty red, and then dark brown; the proof of total decay, and a condition of sadness to which, with a

* The Epernay wine has, consequently, risen in price, by 3s. to 4s. 6d. per dozen.

keen recollection of my welcome to the *pressoirs* of Monsieur Ouvrard, I trust the plants within his invaluable "Clos," will long continue to be strangers. But I have dwelt long enough, for the present, on this subject, however naturally it has grown out of the neighbourhood; and I advise such of my readers as may wish to peruse a more masterly sketch than the limits of this brief episode would allow me to furnish, to turn to the 256th number of "Household Words," (February 17th, 1855) which I accidentally found to confirm all my own observations; and the "Illustrated London News," of August 4th, 1855, will prove equally interesting; though the artist has there brought into one apartment, seated in line, every individual employed in the treatment of a bottle of Champagne; whereas, the manipulations take place in distinct quarters. Both these periodicals were placed in my hands on my return from France, in the last week of August, and will well repay the reference here recommended.

I was conversing with a very intelligent and courteous fellow-passenger, who occupied the seat opposite to mine in the railway-carriage, and who informed me he was proprietor of a large Champagne wine firm at Rheims, when, at a turn, I espied the mighty mass of the Cathedral looming through the rainy mist, and conceived, in a moment, the extent of its grandeur and magnificence. The first sight of the dome of St. Peter's at Rome from Baccano, in a similar state of weather, was not to be compared with this. With exception of the Cathedral of Chartres, which I saw some weeks afterwards at daybreak, I think I never beheld a more majestic feature on land or sea. Not being aware at the time, (it was half past eight, p.m.) of our being so

near the city, the appearance of this colossal shrine of the dark ages was absolutely startling ; and if the ascendant of the Gothic style of architecture, over all other, had admitted of question, this glorious manifestation was, in itself, all sufficient to guide the judgment to a decision. My companion, finding I was entering the neighbourhood for the first time, very obligingly offered to place the next day at my disposal, if I would avail myself of his offer, to show me the principal objects of interest in this curious old town,—its wonders in wine and wool,—and the processes, within his own cellars, to which he had adverted when detailing the expedients which Champagne merchants are compelled to adopt in humouring the tastes of different nations. I deferred my visit for a day or two ; but the reader shall have due report of it. Meanwhile, after having taken up my quarters at one of the best ordered hotels in France, the “Lion d’Or,” exactly in front of the porches of the Cathedral, which position is, of itself, no light recommendation, I addressed myself to the duties, delights, and disagreeables, (the alliteration is inevitable) of sight-seeing and curiosity-hunting. As architectural details and catalogue-like enumeration of the contents and curiosities of public buildings are about the dullest matter an author can lay before his readers, I shall confine my notices of the sumptuous edifice, with which I was thus brought into such immediate contiguity, to such particulars only as it might prove useful and agreeable to remember in the event of any party, before whom these pages lie open, ever paying a visit to Rheims ; which, considering how near it is now brought to Paris, I would most earnestly recommend.

The Cathedral of Rheims is one of the most majestic piles, not only in France, but in the universe. Imperfect as the exterior is,—for it wants the spires with which the original design would have surmounted its two stupendous towers,—the general effect of the Western façade is unspeakably fine; and whether viewed in detail or *en masse*, impresses the mind of the beholder with feelings of veneration akin to the sublime. It is one of the standards by which the French cognoscenti measure perfection in their well-known phrase expressive of the constituents of matchless excellence in the *beau-ideal* of a cathedral: “Take the portal of Rheims, the nave of Amiens, the choir of Beauvais, and the spire of Strasburgh.” Nearly six centuries and a half have elapsed since Robert de Coucy, its immortalized architect, conceived the design of this marvellous *chef-d’œuvre*; but time has dealt gently with it; and that “audax omnia perpeti” rabble that despoiled France, in the day of the great Revolution, left it comparatively unscathed by the fury which levelled ~~many a~~ proud temple and tower in the dust; their chief spoliation restricting itself to the tombs and monuments within. The Northern side of the North Western tower has been rebuilt since 1793; and most beautiful is the restoration. Its niched statues are colossal, and present a splendid appearance. Many statues in the portals of the Western front are from nine to ten feet high; the five hundred, besides these, varying from eight to four feet. I did not detect a headless one in any of these archways of entry. The revenues of the Crown, of the State, of the department and diocese,—to say nothing of the Catholic faithful in other quarters,—are here contributory to the

perpetual work of restoration ; and the scaffolding which, at the present date, screens the Southern side of the South West tower, has been erected upwards of three years and a half.

To be enabled fully to estimate the otherwise incomprehensible beauties of this Western façade, the spectator should turn his back upon it, and hold up before him a mirror, two feet square, in which the whole of the glorious image would be reflected. This expedient, at about an hour before sunset, would present a picture to the eye which no lapse of time, or change of scene, would efface from memory. Its effect in what is called an "Artist's glass," (a square of plate-glass, with a carbonized dense black ground, instead of quicksilver, behind,) is astounding ; and used to attract a crowd of ecstatic admirers on every occasion of my standing in the street and using it. Mine host of "the Golden Lion" had many *agrémens* to offer in his caravanserai ; but not the least among these was a sitting-room so close to the South Western tower that I might have made "studies" from it with pencil, photograph, or camera lucida, at any hour of the day, and brought home a folio of angels and saints to which might have been added David and Goliath, and Clovis receiving baptism, (on the Western front,) which it would have cheered the eyes and warmed the heart of Barry himself to look upon.

The Northern portal, though a striking object, will not bear comparison with those of the West. There are, in fact, two on the North, (one, only, leading into the transept) ; but one is always closed. In the principal one are forty-four little statues, representing, for the most

part, hardened sinners and the evil angels, and devils, gazing with delight on the martyrdom of St. Nicaise, the worthy whose ability to carry away his head, like St. Denys, after decapitation, is grotesquely illustrated in two several places in the Cathedral. There are other demons, ridiculing the miracles wrought by St. Remi. The adjoining porch is filled with statuettes representing the Resurrection and Judgment.

St. Nicaise and St. Remi were eminent saints, filling the See of Rheims, at the early period of the Christian era; and their names are equally magnified in this diocese. There had been four Cathedrals between the fourth and ninth century. That which was built in 822 was destroyed by fire in 1210, with part of the town adjacent to it. In that identical church, St. Bruno, founder of the Carthusian order, worshipped in the year 1079, shortly after his retirement from the world. De Coucy, of Rheims, lived to see Divine service performed, for the first time, in the present noble temple, in the year 1241. The transept was lamentably injured by fire in 1491, but eventually restored; an accident which one might suppose would have induced the town authorities, from that time forth, to forbid the erection of any houses within a certain distance from the sacred building; for the conflagration, in most cases, commences only too often amidst the wooden and highly combustible dwellings; but here, as in many another locality, the area is circumscribed by very narrow limits, and hardly affords one good view of a monument worthy of the homage of Europe.

The interior requires close and attentive inspection, and well repays it. It may sound remarkable, however, that

my first impression, on entry, was that of disappointment; simply from the circumstance of my having expected to find, after the sun-lit splendour of the exterior, that dark, religious gloom, and all those dusky tints of ancient stonemasonry which (unless the Lombards have scraped as others have scraped) impress the mind on entering the Duomo at Milan; and, as I well remember, even more recently than my boyish days, was the case in Canterbury Cathedral. Instead of such sombre dimness all was light and sunny, and looking as fresh as if the glorious edifice had been completed in the first half of the present century. It was, nevertheless, evident that if all the lower windows had been filled with painted glass, as those of the Clerestory are, there would have been none of this garish light. Were this completing adornment bestowed where it is so manifestly required, the beauty of the interior of Rheims Cathedral would be unparalleled. Even as it is, there are scintillations of splendour within these consecrated walls which nothing within the whole range of pictorial art can surpass; and let come what may within the scope of vision, when these perfections have once been gazed upon, they leave upon the memory a conviction that Art has here made its masterpiece, and human ingenuity left nothing to be desired.

The halo crowning the hallowed fane here spoken of is the upper Rose Window in the Western extremity of the nave; for there are two; one above the other in the great façade; which is an unusual feature. The upper of these is forty feet in diameter, and, beyond all comparison the most brilliant and beautiful in the world. Twenty-four rays divide the circle into coruscant sections, throughout which the most vivid splendours of the ruby,

carbuncle, emerald, amethyst, topaz, and diamond, are intermingled with transparent hues of lapis lazuli; as though a meridian sun were blazing with the colours of those several gems appended to its own celestial brightness. Be he who he may that fixes his gaze upon this glorious disk, let him compass the universal globe in life-long travel, and he will not find its equal. The recollections of this orb of glowing light will recur to him, casting each subsequent luminary of art into comparative obscurity, and deterring him even from passing the favourable judgment due to productions of kindred, though not of equal, excellence. This is exclusive praise, indeed; but I unhesitatingly place it on record, and am confident it will stand unimpeached.

The lower window is in the portal itself, and has a singularly happy effect; but the stained glass in it, which I apprehend is comparatively modern, is far inferior to that just mentioned; and though seen to great advantage from behind the high altar, at a distance of a hundred and fifty yards, which subdues the excessive effulgence of its prevailing salmon colour, the generality of its admirers would, I think, much rather see a splendid Organ rising upward in its stead.

Below it, on the capital of a slender column dividing the central Western portal, at the entrance into the nave, is a large statue of St. Nicaise holding out his severed head; a memorial repeated on a larger scale in one of the Northern portals, as I have already mentioned. These are excusable introductions into the ornamental appendages of a church delighting in legends and miracles; but what apology is receivable for the atrocious disfiguration to which the

modern ecclesiastics and commissioners of Taste (!) lent their sanction, some few years since, of colouring the capitals of the columns in the nave, and the ribs of the roof they sustain; and the fifty-two niches on either side of the interior arch of the central portal, with *bright yellow ochre*! The interstices in the groining are tinged with shady *sky blue*. Whether at noon or at dusk, this most revolting gaudiness is absolutely painful to the sense. Each of the niches is occupied by a statuette, thirty inches high, either of some great scriptural personage, or canonized saint; and the effect, however fantastical, of a legion of images engrossing so large a space, would have imparted more than ordinary richness to the architectural embellishments of the sacred edifice, had the material been left in its natural state; instead of which, all the niches are lined with sky blue colouring: and the sculptured fretwork above and below them is picked out in yellow ochre; and this extends to an altitude of sixty feet: the niches ascending in threes. The aspect of the whole is *bizarre* in the extreme, and reminded me of the tiers of "preparations" in Surgeons' Hall, or any other such museum exhibiting objects of curiosity, in or out of bottles. All this coating of blue and yellow wash was brought into use at the coronation of Charles X. The decorative artificers drove great hooks into the columns, from the capitals of which were suspended, through the entire length of the nave, the richest tapestries and bauners; and the Chapter and their *employés* thought it would heighten the effect of the upholsterers' handiwork if the capitals were so coloured as to exhibit the appearance of dead gold. It bears a much stronger resemblance to Dijon mustard! It is impossible

to restrain one's indignation at the sight of such atrocity ; and a glance at the two arched windows on either side of the said portal, looking up the aisles, where the niches and statuettes are left untouched, and produce a really beautiful effect, enables even the most superficial observer to perceive the extent of injury perpetrated by this outrage on religious feeling, and on all the laws of taste. But how common, at home and abroad, is such delinquency ! It was matter of gratulation, in this instance, that some " Mr. Compo"* (of St. Antholin's notoriety) had not added a dash or two of vermilion !

There is an exquisitely beautiful window at the Eastern extremity behind the high altar, in the stained glass of which the most delicate rose and blue tints predominate ; as in the Sainte Chapelle in Paris. Seen from the Western entry, at a distance of nearly four hundred and sixty feet, this is one of the most charming objects in the interior. I must not, however, omit to mention that the Rose Window above the great Organ in the *North transept*, effulgent in purple, white, and rose hues of inconceivable splendour, is all but identical with the upper one already mentioned in the Western front. The large Clerestory windows, also, gleaming in fine blue and purple, are considered the finest in Europe ; as every one might readily believe ; and the cost of their erection was in every instance defrayed from the king's revenues : and thus, indeed, it is that we are able to account for the overflowing magnificence of the ornaments introduced into this noble temple ; for each king of France, at his coronation in Rheims, made

* See Paget's " St. Antholins," 1844, one of the happiest *exposés* ever published on Church Beautifying and Repairing, or " botching."

a point of presenting to it some princely donation ; either to shed splendour on the ceremonial of Divine worship, or to embellish the edifice itself in which he was crowned.

For many years,—upwards of a century and a half,—these coronations took place in the Abbey Church of St. Rémi ; but eventually they were restricted to the Cathedral. The result has been an accumulation of treasure in various categories of excellence, through several dynasties ; each monarch vying with his predecessor in the extent of his largess and the permanent value of the gift bestowed. Among these annexations to the wealth so amassed are two marvellous copies, in Gobelins Tapestry, of “ St. Paul at Athens,” and “ St. Paul and St. Barnabas ;” cartoons of Raphael (size of the original paintings). Being hung in a lateral chapel at twenty feet distance from the iron grating or *grille*, these incomparable productions deceive the eye most marvellously. I hesitate not to record the fact of my having mistaken them for oil paintings of first rate excellence ; and it subsequently occurred to me that I had seen them both in a half-finished state at the Gobelins Manufactory in 1847, when it was stated that they would cost four and twenty thousand francs each.

Immediately contiguous to this chapel, in the aisle, is a large remnant of ancient Roman tessellated pavement, ten feet by eight, which was found in 1845 under the basement floor of a part of the Archbishop's palace, and presented to the Cathedral by the finder. This palace adjoins the church ; and on the court-yard gate, (behind which are two chestnut-trees quite worthy of the avenue at Bushy) is

an affix, in gilt letters, informing the public that this is the Archiepiscopal residence :

PALAIS DE L'ARCHEVECHÉ.

How queer would be a similar notification at Lambeth !

My interest, however, was specially awakened by the brief history of Cardinal Gossuet, the Archbishop, related to me by my obliging acquaintance as we left the Cathedral and his throne. He is, at this moment, one of the most illustrious and remarkable prelates in the empire, and regarded as the greatest Theologian, if not the most powerful and elegant writer in the Roman Catholic Church. Were his oratorical abilities on a par with the Latin scholarship by which he has been long signalized, the ancient reputation of Bossuet himself could hardly have surpassed the high qualities, the genius, and intellectual ascendancy of this most eminent of the living ecclesiastics of France ; but the invaluable gift of eloquence has been denied by Providence to a man otherwise singularly elevated and endowed by its favours ; and Gossuet cannot deliver ten words extemporaneously, at a public meeting or in the pulpit, without painful hesitation and blundering. Still his talents must have been, from the first, of no ordinary calibre.

He was the son of " a small farmer," on whose land he used, as a lad, to plough, and assist in the usual operations of tillage ; and, as leisure permitted, gained daily instruction in the rudiments of Latin and elementary knowledge at the Communal school, till at length he became more attached

to head-work than handiwork, and was placed by his parents at a Training Seminary, where he completed the course of preliminary study ; and, being qualified for a learned profession, eventually received ordination. The " full proof" of his " ministry" soon becoming apparent, his rise and advancements were rapid ; and he is now not more ennobled by princely rank in a Church of which, far beyond the diocese of Rheims, he is the admired ornament and champion, than by the exercise of many eminently Christian virtues that induce all men to hold him in reverential and kindly estimation.

The pavement in the Choir of this Cathedral, forty-five feet in width, composed of various highly polished foreign marbles, was a *Regium Donum*, and is hardly to be equalled in France ; but all interest in architectural excellence, or in royal founders and benefactors, derivable from the contemplation of so vast an accumulation of votive treasure and consecrated riches,—from the glories of the high altar, and the wealth and grandeur, and prodigies of art surrounding it,—is absorbed by the consciousness of this being the very spot where, about the same period of the year at which I was visiting the time-honoured sanctuary, Joan of Arc, having fulfilled her declaration that Charles VII should be crowned at Rheims (however improbable such an issue from his desperate fortunes seemed) took up her station, banner in hand, by that false-hearted monarch's side, on the 17th of July, 1429, and witnessed his coronation. Her request, on bended knees, that she might be permitted thenceforth to relinquish the military and harassing life she had led, and to return to Domremy with her father and uncle who were present among the

wondering and awe-struck multitude, was not indulged. The selfish king and his generals felt her continuing presence to be a necessity; and she was constrained to re-enter, with bitter reluctance, that career of martial achievements and political (but no longer religious) excitement which led to her "foul and most unnatural murder." One might naturally hope to find some "storied urn or animated bust" to the memory of Jeanne within the walls of a sanctuary to which her fateful history had attached such imperishable interest; but none such relic or memorial of any kind meets the eye on the spot where her countrymen, whether princes or peasants, gazed on her features with admiration and silent homage; acknowledging in every rite and ceremony of the unlooked for "sacre;"* the result of her single, individual, prowess,—and the accomplishment, as she averred, of the sovereign will of Heaven.

There were numerous tombs and monuments here before the Revolution; but none have survived the havoc of those deplorable times, except a Roman Sarcophagus wrought out of one entire block of white marble, representing Jovinus, Consul at Rheims, A.D. 367, on horseback; surrounded by a group of mounted attendants and companions, (a lady among the number), surprised by a lion in the midst of a boar hunt. The figures are about a fourth of the size of life, and are beautifully sculptured. The Sarcophagus is three yards long, and one and a half high, and is considered to have been the receptacle of his remains in the fourth century. But for the tradition of his having

* Coronation.

been a Christian, this relic would be rather out of place in the Cathedral where it stands at the entry of the South aisle.

. The Great Organ (for all the large churches, and many of the smaller, on the Continent, have, for the most part, two Organs)—thirty feet in width—in the North transept, is a superb instrument. The central stack of pipes is sixty feet high. The choir (or subsidiary) Organ is just under the first arch within the choir, of pointed Gothic design, and rising into a finely tapering minaret or pinnacle sixty feet in height; somewhat in the style of that above the Bishop's throne in Exeter Cathedral.

The pulpit is ordinary enough, as is oftentimes the case. It transpired that the services of the Romish Ritual are conducted here with unusual pomp and circumstance; and no expense is spared in maintaining every department in the highest state of efficiency. A gentleman conversant with such matters assured me that neither at Nôtre Dame Cathedral in Paris, nor in any of the richest churches in that capital, were so many first-rate musicians and singers retained for the choir as at Rheims; nor so large a number of acolytes and officials attached to the staff of Clergy surrounding the Cardinal who was mostly resident. All that I saw and heard appeared to confirm his assertion in every particular.

There were twelve canons in the stalls, on my second visit; each carrying over his left arm a scarf or stole, either of ermine or of grey fur. Previous to Vespers a priest delivered a familiar lecture to two large schools, boys and girls, seated in the North aisle. At five minutes to three o'clock they all sung, in perfect chord, without accompa-

niment, a simple and touching hymn, and were then dismissed to their appointed seats in the body of the church. This was on the eve of the fête of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The organist brought out the full powers of his mighty instrument. It was as the sound of an orchestra composed of two hundred musicians; and his introduction of a clarinet, oboe, violoncello, and contra-basso movement, through the medium of couplers and composition pedals, might have deceived an unpractised ear into the belief that all those instruments were actually in use at his side. The final psalm, sung by the whole congregation, (a very rare occurrence in the Romish churches), was so exquisitely harmonious that I made a point of jotting it down. There were twelve adults and thirty boys singing in the Choir: the score was complete, and required the utmost nicety of execution; but no difficulties in any of the voice lines affected the harmony. The sopranos and tenors led it; and the Organ, with subdued tones, left them to the distinct enunciation of every melody in a manner sufficiently indicative of the maître-de-chapelle's care, and of his numerous pupils' abilities.

Many of the foreign Organs are now fitted with two peculiar stops, one of which produces the effect of mutes placed on the violins, while the other makes every note shiver. A short *andante* given off in this manner affects the ear surprisingly: the note seems to descend from an immense height in air, and to die away as if passing off in a cloud.

The congregations, on each occasion of my being present, were immense—certainly amounting to three thousand persons;—the finest decoration that can adorn the House

of God, and one of the happiest symptoms, in the present day, (as in England in the seventeenth century), of restoration to a right mind in a people who, when irreligion had become the fashion, were then made to feel most acutely the rapidity and perils of their downward movement in the overthrow of a falling State, and the misery of their bereavements in a prostrate and degraded Church.

CHAPTER VII.

RHEIMS : Wine and wool trade—Mars, Venus, Ceres, and Bacchus : gates and boulevards thus designated—Town library : rare and beautiful manuscripts—Houses on chalk-built foundations : their destiny—The market and provisions—Extraordinary glut of rabbits—The “*pois blanc à grandes cosses*,” or sugar-pea—The celebrated “*Rheims biscuit*,” no biscuit at all—Want of spring-water—The law courts—Table-talk : “*Liberty, equality, and fraternity*”—The “*Times*” newspaper, Commissioner, and Special Correspondent—Jesuits’ library and its present occupants—Jeanne d’Arc’s parents and “*The Zebra*” inn—Abbey church of St. Remi—Poverty of the worsted-workers, wool-spinners, and confectioners’ labouring men, women, and children.

I PREMISED, in the preceding pages, that a day or two would be devoted at Rheims to sight-seeing and curiosities ; and this will necessarily entail a Chapter of Miscellanies from a note-book full of most heterogeneous matters, which, upon revisal, I hardly deem it fair to withhold from readers who have gone thus far with me. The Handbook being silent, (as was but reasonable) on almost all the objects here adverted to, it is possible that the present mention of them may afford just that kind of information which travellers, adopting the same route, might desire to

possess on entering the town : and he who has had to glean it for himself, bearing the burden and heat of the day, can best appreciate the value of such communications. Our countrymen, however, so far as I could ascertain, are very seldom seen at Rheims : possibly, because the railway is of very recent construction, and the city lies out of the direct line ; and yet, few of its class more amply repay a visit.

It is situate on the right bank of the river Vesle, in a vast basin surrounded by calcareous hills that are covered with vines producing wine of most excellent quality. It is of high antiquity ; having been a considerable town long before the Romans overran Gaul. At that period it was the chief city of Belgian Gaul, and the principal station of a Republic which the masters of the world thought it worth while treating with great respect, and taking into alliance.

Rheims was originally known as Durocortorum, but subsequently took the name of Rhemi or Remi, after the appellation of the tribe who first founded it. Under the successors of Augustus Cæsar, and up to the reign of Vespasian, it maintained its importance and preponderating influence ; holding all the country between the Seine, Marne, and Meuse. The Romans had erected very handsome public and private buildings, arches, &c., the last vestiges of which are rapidly disappearing, though the names of Mars, Venus, Ceres, and Bacchus

——“ that first from out the purple grape
Crush'd the sweet poison of misused wine.”

will long perpetuate the memory of what hath been.

Rheims embraced Christianity in the year of our Lord 360. Six years afterwards, Jovinus, its Consul, already spoken of, became a convert; and about the year 400 Bishop Nicaise founded a Church here, which pious act he survived six years only; being murdered by the Vandals who made themselves masters of the city. One of his successors, Saint Remigius or Remi, converted Clovis to the Christian faith, and baptized him here in the year 496, after the battle of Tolbiac; on which occasion nearly all the leaders of the Franks conformed to the same rite. One of the sculptured decorations of the Western façade of the Cathedral represents Clovis immersed in the baptismal font. The city has been Archi-episcopal since the year 744; up to which date there had been eight bishops. There have been seventy archbishops; many of whom were Prince Cardinals holding temporal and spiritual sovereignty ever since the sixth century.

The townspeople now enjoy a very agreeable promenade along the lofty ramparts overlooking the country, and forming, on more than one side of the city, its line of boundary. In early times, their circumference was four miles in extent; the fosses, however, were long since filled up, and, being planted with various ornamental trees, became the favourite walks we now see. The compact stone walls and towers withstood many a fierce assault before the days of powder and ball; so frequently was Rheims ravaged by civil war and foreign invasion.

It took up arms in 719 against Charles Martel, who took it by storm, and laid it waste. In 990 Charles de Lorraine, the rival of Hugh Capet, who had been acknowledged by Rheims, gained possession of the city, and

inflicted on it great injuries. It was invaded again in 1359, by our Edward III. On that occasion, the inhabitants embodied themselves of their own accord, and maintained such a spirited resistance as to compel him to raise the siege; upon which they pursued and killed every one of his rear guard.

In 1421 it yielded to the English power; but Joan of Arc succeeded in driving out our forces, and lived to witness the result of this, and of many a subsequent victory, in the coronation of Charles VII. From the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, including the wars of the League, of the Huguenot insurrectionists, and the vicissitudes of the eventful ages elapsing between Henry III and Louis XVI—a period of two hundred years—the prosperity of this town, however checked and retarded by evils affecting the whole kingdom, gradually increased; and towards the close of Napoleon the First's reign, Rheims had attained an importance which the enlarged and improved facilities of trade are certain to extend. There is no great military display here. It would be altogether *de trop* amidst the engrossing occupations of the two principal portions of the people; and the recollections of their evil plight in 1814, when the town was taken and retaken by the Russians and French alternately, (Napoleon commanding in person,) inspire a dread of "glorious war," whose influences are ever unfriendly to the particular commerce of these districts of the country. The fifty thousand inhabitants, whose great ancestors were continually holding themselves ready for battle, are now thriving on the staple trade secured to them as holders of the largest wool market in France.

Here is the great emporium for flannel in all its varieties : Kerseymeres, Circassians, châlets, blankets, tartans, mouselines-de-laine, carded wool, and worsted thread, give employment to nearly as many again as the whole collective population, living in the environs and in parts of Ardennes, who bring their finished work into Rheims. The wool which makes our best Merino under-waistcoats, (that precious upper skin, preserving the health of so many millions,) is worked up here. Two firms, Messrs. Seintis and Co., and Croutelle and Co., buy up fleeces from all parts of France, Australia, and Russia. They intermix and spin, and send them to Glasgow, as French wool, to make the best plaid : as Francis Edwards, of that city, agent for M. Croutelle, could certify. The French manufacturers, I was told, are unwilling to incur risk, by exporting woollen stuff on mere speculation ; the result is, our English agents come into the Rheims market, and complete immense purchases at a very low rate, which limits the native manufacturers to a profit of five per cent. ; “but,” said my informant, “your English importers realize twenty.”

The dying processes are in perpetual action. It was a strange sight to behold the kennels overflowing between eight and nine o'clock in the evening, with broad streams of various hues, black, blue, crimson, lilac, and yellow—the rinsings of the great vats or cisterns, in which the woollens had been steeped all day ; and many a circuitous *détour* must the foot passenger make, who would complete his evening promenades untinged by these parti-coloured waters. I encountered many in my way to the boulevard-like Esplanade of Ceres, and the Gate of Mars—the now only remaining vestiges of ancient Roman occupancy ;

though at no remote period all four gates—those of Mars, Venus, Ceres, and Bacchus—were extant and in use; the names of the two latter having probably been suggested by the quantity of corn and grapes which, it is reasonable to believe, was grown hereabouts even in the ancient days. “So think the Archæologists of this ancient city,” said Madame de R——, “but they pretend not to suggest that their forefathers were more redoubtable men of war, or the maids and matrons of the Augustan age more beautiful than the belles of the province at large.” Madame’s patrician family had numbered many a chieftain and conqueror in the field of Mars and Glory; and it was but simple gallantry to rejoin that, judging by their descendants, the aborigines might be supposed to have possessed good title to all four gates, when all their sons were valiant, and all their daughters fair.

The Porta Martis was an Arch of Triumph, erected by the Romans in honour of Augustus, when Agrippa, governor of Gaul, had completed the great military roads which went through Rheims. It was used as a town-gate up to the year 1544, but was subsequently almost obliterated by its insertion in the great mass of earth forming the ramparts, and was thus lost to view for the space of fifty years; it was then laid open for a time, but, as necessity arose, was again incorporated with the mound, and remained in this state for eighty years. At length, in 1812, this portion of the military embankments was so far broken up, as to leave the side of the gate facing the open country quite clear; but the town side remained still buried in the accumulation of mould, rubble, and stone, forming the belt of fortification.

During the reign of Louis Philippe, and the tenure of office enjoyed by the intellectual Guizot, the *Porta Martis* was almost entirely cleared, though not to the extent it merits.

This gate leads from the Boulevard to the Town Hall ; the celebrated library of which, consisting of upwards of thirty-two thousand volumes, and fifteen hundred manuscripts, is mainly composed of the books and papers brought from the Jesuits' College, at the date of its abolition in 1793. Among the manuscripts,—which a private view enabled me to inspect at leisure,—were the following very curious relics :—A vellum copy of the Gospel, in the Slavonic dialect ; eleventh century : Archbishop Anselm's monologue on the Incarnation of the Word ; twelfth century : “*Sacramentarium Vetustissimum*” of Pope Gregory ; ninth century : A copy of the Bible, in Latin, broad octavo, two columns in each page ; thirteenth century : Two beautifully illustrated missals of the fifteenth century, and one of the thirteenth, once belonging to the Abbey of St. Remi. The bull of Nicholas IV. authorizing the refusal of payment of debts improperly contracted ; Latin : A.D. 1288. A bull of Innocent IV., forbidding the excommunication of women who should come to be churched ; though their husbands might be under excommunication ; A.D. 1244 : A bull of Pope Gregory IX. exempting the religious community of St. Remi, in an excommunication launched against the townspeople and aldermen (*échevins*) ; October, 1236 : A vellum MSS. of the Gospel given by Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, to the Abbey of St. Thierry ; ninth century : The “*Book of Hours*,” (*Livre d'Heures*) pre-

sented by Mary, Queen of Scots, during her brief stay at Rheims, to her Aunt Renée de Lorraine, Abbess of St. Pierre les Dames. The arms of France and Scotland are emblazoned on one side; the crest and device of Francis I. on the other. (This present was made, in all probability, about the period of the beautiful donor's marriage with Francis II. in 1558, when she was only sixteen years of age:—Her mother, Mary of Lorraine, Queen of James V., having sent her to France for education, when only six years old.)—A large vellum folio, three feet by two, embellished with exquisite body colour paintings of cherubs, flowers, &c., (each figure seven inches long,) being the “Graduale et Antiphonale ad usum Archimonasterii S. Remigii Remensis, pro festis primi ordinis.” [An office-book for the choir of the Abbey of St. Remi, for high festivals.] “Scribebat Parisiis Dominus Carolus Mercier, monachus et presbyter Monasterii S. Germani a pratis,” A.D. 1784, with a motto at the foot of the title page:—“Sic stemus ad psallendum ut mens nostra concordet voci nostræ.” (Sing we praises with understanding.)* I have seen many vellum manuscripts at Rome and elsewhere; but this was the most beautiful that ever yet fell under my notice.

In the apartments adjoining to this library are preserved many interesting remnants of antiquity, found chiefly in the neighbourhood; among which are numerous weapons from a battle-field near Sedan, in Ardennes; especially spears, swords, and metal scabbards, of the ancient Romans. Among the drawings and pictures, in one of

* Literally, “Let us in such wise stand up to sing that our understandings may accord with our utterance.”

these rooms, was a good portrait in crayon, of David Garrick.

On my return from the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, I stopped to look at a range of vast cellars, in progress of building on a scale appropriate only to docks and landing warehouses.

These were to be the foundations, in stone masonry, of a line of houses, the frontage of which was set back twenty feet beyond the range of those recently standing in that quarter. The inhabitants, it appears, have, at length, determined on never more constructing foundations in *chalk*—the soil on which their city stands. After every occurrence of three or four days' consecutive rain, in autumn or winter, down comes a house or two! The foundations consisting of chalk, and the water finding its way, in occasional overflows, to the porous material beneath, the percolation causes a softening of the piers and coigns; and the whole fabric above begins to settle and subside, and, in less than twenty-four hours, gives way altogether, to the infinite terror of the neighbourhood, where the cause is only too well known. I saw in the market-place the ruins of a house which had fallen about two months previous, in this manner.

The kind of chalk found here resembles what is called in Bedfordshire, "hullock." It is excellent for building, if it remain above ground, and be exposed freely to the atmosphere, which hardens it: accordingly, the masons at Rheims still "face" with blocks of it; but have wholly discontinued to use it under ground. Indeed, I believe the authorities have forbidden any such appropriation of the treacherous material.

The market above mentioned was mediocre enough in its supplies and business, which is carried on partly in the open air, partly within a lofty, well ventilated building or Halle. All the dairies of La Brie seemed to have sent in their last gatherings and remainder; for I never beheld such masses of rotten cheese. The atmosphere around the stalls, where the favourite production lay, was loaded with the unsavoury effluvium.

There was but one butcher's stall; but this little modicum of beef, mutton, and lamb, (the latter on sale at sixpence the pound) was compensated by *hundreds of skinned rabbits, weighing four pounds each*, and priced at three shillings and twopence the couple. American hams seemed also to be a favourite article, and fetched sevenpence a pound. Poultry, eggs, butter and bacon, were abundant; and fifteen per cent below provincial prices in England. A few fresh-water fish were visible here and there; but none from the sea. Red onions, short-horned and globular carrots, endive and Cos lettuces were plentiful, and that particular species of pea, called *pois-blanc à grandes cosses*—(the large crooked sugar pea, raised in Paris.)* The pods are very large; weighing nearly an ounce and a half; and ought to be gathered while young, when they cook as tender as a kidney-bean. No shelling is requisite. They are sown in April, and are eatable in August; but it appears to me, who have cultivated them, that they are a hybrid vegetable, neither pea nor bean, and of very equivocal pretensions to good repute.

* Mr. Gray, of the British Museum, very obligingly sent me a sample from Paris in the winter of 1854.

There was hardly any fruit worth looking at ; and very small apricots were charged at twopence each ; strawberries at sevenpence ; cherries at threepence ; and new potatoes at three half pence, a pound ; a rate exceeding the prices in the West of England at that date, and far from being warranted by the article. I simply mention these facts to disabuse the public mind of the commonly prevailing notion that *fruit is so cheap in France*, and her vegetable productions so abundant.

While on the subject of local productions, I may as well observe that the "Biscuit de Rheims" enjoys the same repute in France that Le Mann's does, or did, in our country : not that there is the slightest affinity ; as the former *is not a biscuit at all*, but a sponge cake ; as the Dictionary will testify. Its peculiar merit lies in its retaining its form and flavour unimpaired for upwards of a year ; and its exportation in wooden or tin cases, to all parts of France and many regions lying far beyond it, is something marvellous. I have one by me still which I bought a year and a half since, and though it resembles the Clown's brain described by the melancholy Jaques,* it indicates no change whatever.

The Gingerbread of Rheims is also of as high celebrity as the Banbury cakes of old England : Indeed, all the bread, Household as well as "Fancy," is incomparably good at Rheims, (Ceres still being propitious, no doubt, to the arable land occupier) ; and the milk-rolls at the "Lion d'Or" would be accounted rare delicacies even at the breakfast tables in Windsor Castle.

* "As dry as the remainder biscuit after a voyage."

SHAKSPEARE'S "AS YOU LIKE IT."

This town used to suffer under a material drawback : none of the land-springs supplied wholesome water ; and this detriment began at length to operate so prejudicially when the population was grown to double its original estimate, as to induce a public-spirited individual, Monsieur Godinot, to bring at his own cost, (like our Middleton), the waters of the Vesle, which are highly salubrious, into the immediate precincts of the town. A reservoir and forcing-engine were then erected for the transmission of it into every street and alley ; an acquisition more precious than that of their justly renowned Cathedral.

The Palais de Justice (or Law Courts), is a noble modern palace of the Doric Order of architecture. A superb semi-circular railing, and a grass plot, planted with ornamental trees, exhibit its front to the greatest advantage. On either side of the noble portico is the statue of a draped female. One represents Law : the other Incorruptibility. The former holds a lamp in her left hand ; her right resting on the Table of the Law. The latter holds in her left hand a rule, and crushes with her left foot a vase, out of which are seen issuing innumerable pieces of coin.

The several courts or Tribunals lead off out of a magnificent long hall.

1. Le Tribunal de Paix et de simple Police. 2. La Cour d'Assise. 3. Le Tribunal de Commerce. 4. Le Tribunal Civil. The other doors of entry and exit in the vast hall lead to the high Law Officers' Chambers, Witnesses' Waiting Rooms, &c., &c.

The " Tribunal Civil" was the only Court open. It is

of noble dimensions, admirably planned and built; well ventilated, and with such arrangement for seeing and hearing distinctly, in every direction, as to render the furthest point of distance from the Bench quite as eligible as the nearest to it.

Three judges (in plain clothes, but wearing bands), sate in their large arm-chairs, constituting "the Bench." The principal of the three, occupying the central seat, was reprimanding a witness who was giving evidence as I entered, for not having stated she was a widow! The leading examination is always conducted by the judges; and, in fact, the trials are begun, continued, and ended, in a manner differing in every single particular from our own,—whether in respect of the arraignment, pleading, evidence, examination, attorneys, barristers, or jurymen. The latter worthies are kept on the *qui vive*, both by Judge and Counsel, and cannot possibly fall asleep; as four out of twelve will frequently fall, during a long trial at our County Assizes, where a foreigner would be disposed to regard our vaunted Trial by Jury (!) a mockery: as, indeed, some of their verdicts sound, even in the ears of astonished natives.

The administration of Justice formed one of the topics I heard rather amusingly discussed at dinner on the day of my visit to these Courts.

"The three words," said one of the party, "'Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity,' are worthy of all veneration."

"We have to seek their realization," observed his neighbour, "and are not sure to find it. We enjoy it, *nous*

autres, as an *idea*. We are not to grasp the *substance*, assuredly."

"Ah! no," exclaimed his *vis-à-vis*, "we must go across the water to understand even its *influence* on a nation: no one who has lived in *England* could fail to perceive how thoroughly the principles of true liberty are carried out *there*. The English enjoy it positively and essentially, in every condition and shape and channel of fruition. Their Press,* *par exemple*, argues every thing; reveals every thing; dictates the proper policy, upholds the Government, or puts it down effectively. It is the ruling voice."

"The present war," said another, "has exhibited a phenomenon without precedent or parallel in the history of the world and of Journalism: 'The Times' Commissioner and its Special Correspondent have not only taken in hand the transmission of 'the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth' from the scene of conflict and trial, but have actually assumed the initiative in distributing reliefs in aid, and in repairing the deplorable errors and shortcomings of an incapable administration at home, in a manner and with an authority which none other but the Liberty enjoyed in Great Britain would enable or embolden even a public Company, still less an individual Editorship, to assume. It is one of the most astounding marvels of the present century; and the glory of the English."

* A French gentleman of distinction proposed as a toast, at a large dinner in Paris, "The Palladium of published Truth, the English journal 'The Times.'"

"We must admit this to be the fact;" observed the gentleman at my side. "The English mind can bear all this, but it would madden France."

"Oh!" interposed another, "*our* Journals are beneath contempt. Why, Sir, the newspapers are forbidden even to report the phenomena of Nature! They dare not declare the threatened destruction of the corn crops, or to prognosticate a deficient harvest. The Government consider such communications likely to create general uneasiness and disquietude, and to act prejudicially on public credit and commercial enterprise."

"And yet," rejoined my opposite, "although the Prefects sent this interdict to all the Editors in the year 1847, when storm after storm had laid half the wheat in France, the harvest of 1848 was the most productive ever known!"

"Well," said his neighbour, who seemed to attach some talismanic virtue to the three Republican war cries, "I say we are bound to honour the sacred words, 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity:' we know them much better than we used, and we are sure to experience the full force of them all at one period or another of life. Napoleon I. had certain notions on Liberty. He knew what the nation wanted. He foretold in 1814, that in less than fifty years there would be a Republic. France became a Republic long, long before that period had elapsed."

"Eh! mon Dieu!" exclaimed another, "there is not much vitality in modern republics! The first lasted only eleven years; the second, seven; the last, four months!"

The champion for the three magical words resumed :

“ Eh ! bien ! Que voulez-vous ? At any rate, it is a great privilege that at the tribunal of *Justice*, at least, every man of us is held equal.”

“ There is another tribunal,” added my neighbour on the right, “ where it is sure to be enjoyed—at *death* ! *He* is a leveller, quoiqu’il en soit !”

“ I should say again,” exclaimed my *homo trium verborum*, “ that there is another period of existence at which all men are equal : namely, at their *birth*.”

The other did not admit this :—The middle term was equivocating and illogical. Finding his premises faulty, the Republican explained :

“ I mean, that we are all then in the self same condition of helplessness : and, in that respect, we are all on a par.”

But this was pronounced *mauvais* ; whereupon I proposed a toast to the continuance of the happy Fraternization now, at length, established between the two greatest nations of the Universe—

“ That English may as French, French Englishmen
Receive each other.”*

and, it is unnecessary to add, the sentiment was most cordially reciprocated. It was an amusing episode, upon the whole, in the day’s “ *notabilia* ;” and little straws thus thrown up, show the direction of the various currents that blow independently of the prevailing wind.

* Shakspeare’s “ Henry V.”

It was very evident they did not distrust their English messinate; but I remember the day when seven men would not have dared to hold such commune in France; no, not even "among friends."

On the day following I accompanied my railway acquaintance to the Hôpital de la Charité, or General Hospital. This building was a College of Jesuits, who were expelled therefrom in the year 1793. It is now appropriated to the reception of the sick and infirm of either sex, and of young children from three to sixteen years of age; in all, nearly four hundred inmates.

I was introduced to the Supérieure, (for the whole establishment is conducted by the Sœurs de la Charité), and ushered into what was formerly the chief Library, but now the Lingerie or Laundry, (though not the washing or ironing place), where all the sheets and blankets are kept in store. It was almost ludicrous to see seven or eight of the Sisters folding up with all assiduity the dried blankets, and ranging them in layers on the shelves of the book-cases, the inscriptions above which remain in *statu quo*, as when the disciples of Loyola conned their contents "to make the worse appear the better reason," and assumed their craft to be a direct inspiration from Heaven. PHILOSOPHIA NOVA was crammed full of counterpanes; and SCRIPTURÆ INTERPRETES already held blankets sufficient for forty beds. This actual appropriation of the shelves, according to the new notions of France upon Religious Usefulness, and the interpretation of Bible doctrine in favour of Charity to the exclusion of all that Charity is *not*, and of all that Jesuitism *was*, struck me as peculiarly apposite. The headings

all round the long room ran thus : (over and above the two titles already mentioned).

“ Theologi Scholastici : Patres Latini : Patres Græci : Historia Sacra : Oratores Profani : Philosophia Antiqua : Mathematici : Oratores Sacri : Historia Profana (three cases) Ascetici : Philologi : Grammatici : Theologi Controversiæ : Theologi Morales ;” under which several designations lie sorted and classed, at this moment, some five thousand changes of linen and flannel for the poor and unlearned occupants of the dormitories, whose heads have never been troubled with the laws of Philosophy, and into whose hearts it certainly has never entered to make a vow of either poverty or celibacy ; and who repose, in all probability, much the easier for that circumstance.

The Supérieure gave me to understand they were all under the immediate auspices of the Madonna ; which was conclusive.



Travellers are sure to learn that they may still see the identical house in which Joan of Arc was lodged on the occasion of Charles the Seventh's coronation. The tenant, however, of the “ Maison Rouge,”—a small coaching-house to the left of the “ Lion d'Or”—(round the corner, but in full view of the Cathedral,)—assured me that his premises merely stood upon the site occupied four centuries since by the Inn called “ The Zebra,” (L'Ane rayé). The marble tablet inserted in the front of the present tenement exhibits an inscription to this effect :

“ In this Hostelry, called at that period ‘The Zebra,’ A.D. 1429, the Father and Mother of Jeanne d’Arc were lodged and maintained at the expense of the Town Council.”

So that no claim is here put forth to the *prestige* of poor Jeanne’s presence as a lodger in the “Hostelry.” She is believed to have accompanied the Royal suite to the palace of the Archbishop in which Charles was entertained with all his retinue; and where, it is rational to conclude, his prophetic champion must have been treated as an highly esteemed guest. The records in the Town Hall afford irrefragable evidence of her father and uncle having been duly cared for at the “Zebra;” and the reckoning, it appears, amounted to upwards of a pound, English value. The poor maiden of Domremy’s richly merited distinctions eventually cost *her* her life.

I have delayed to speak of the Abbey Church of St. Remi, because it would have been difficult to make sufficiently distinguished mention of this beautiful object, immediately after having paid so large a tribute of admiration to its powerful rival the Cathedral. Many hours did I pass in silence and solitude on this hallowed spot; to leave it, on each occasion, with feelings of increased reverence. Tourists who have seen the interior of St. Stephen’s at Caen, may form a very fair conception of that of the Abbey Church of St. Remi—a temple of high and venerable antiquity, whose earliest foundations were laid by Clovis and Clotilda; and within whose walls the ashes rest of that canonized saint who first preached Christianity in this district of heathen Franks, and left the

honoured name by which the House of God was dedicated to his memory. This resemblance, however, is limited to the Nave which was built at the same period with that of the Norman Church; for the Choir, of florid Gothic style, was not completed till after the middle of the twelfth century.

Taking it for all in all, the interior, as beheld, (on immediately entering the Nave,) at the Western extremity, is the most chastely elegant and perfect vista on which the eye could rest. By the time, however, that we are advanced half way up the nave, the modern stained glass windows of the Western *façade* begin to dazzle and distract; and the majestic simplicity of the Norman arches seems disturbed by such radiant illumination. These windows are all of modern execution, and of the highest order of excellence in their particular style; but, however delicate be the combinations of pale rose, lilac, light blue, and green tints, which characterize the painted windows of the present day, there is something to regret in the absence of the primitive lead-work, and deep crimson and indigo hues, prevailing in the ancient specimens; and though workmanship most exquisite prevails in every square foot of the decorative windows (those of narrow width especially,) which meet the eye, now, between La Sainte Chapelle in Paris and St. Mary's at Munich, they seem to bear only too close a resemblance to incomparably well-painted *transparent blinds*; an effect which we must attribute altogether to the ornate regularity observed in the shaping of the glass which is now inserted in long and wide sections; and to the almost entirely concealed lines,

straight or curved, of the connecting leads which hold each compartment of the beautiful, but brittle material.

There is a very brilliant rose window at the Western end of the Abbey Church, exhibiting a general fusion of orange, light blue, red, yellow, and purple; deep carbuncle red glowing in the centre: but, still, immeasurably inferior in effect to that at the Cathedral.

The transepts are plain and elegant like the Nave.

The Choir, of rich Gothic architecture, owes its crown-distinction to the superb Tomb of St. Remi, (whose death took place at Rheims, A.D. 545,) erected at enormous cost, about three hundred and twenty-three years ago, by Cardinal de Lenoncourt, and forming so conspicuous an object in its elevation, as to give to the Choir the aspect of a Mausoleum, built for the express purpose of containing the monument: as in the case of Maximilian's Tomb in the Franciscan Chapel at Inspruck. Twelve life-sized white marble statues of lay and spiritual peers of France surround it; each within an inch or two of the tomb; and a superabundance of small Corinthian columns and mouldings, in the encircling colonnade of Italian architecture, impart an air of great magnificence to the general design; but no ingenuity can avail to make this style harmonize with the Gothic. Hence the florid Greek screen, and central arch heading the transepts, are positively repulsive. It is more than "want of keeping." It is a harsh intrusion, though the features thus offending be, in themselves, faultless; and the masterpiece of skill which would have shed lustre on the Interior of St. Peter's at Rome, or of St Paul's in London, had this most

sumptuous tomb stood in either, has only availed, in this instance, to clash with the original conceptions of the first architect; and to shock the eye of correct taste by an irreconcilable and painful contrast. The Tyrolese monument, above mentioned, encompassed by twenty-two bronze statues, nearly nine feet high each, of Emperors, Kings, Queens, and Archdukes, is immeasurably superior: no unities are there violated;—and the effect of those giant forms, in moonlight, borders on the supernatural.

But let me not disparage any of the beauties of St. Remi. It is a noble Sanctuary, and, both within and without, reflects high honour on the zeal with which Catholic France in this, as in numberless similar instances, has repaired the ravages of her revolutionists. The atrocities perpetrated within these sacred walls in 1793, required thirty years' continuous industry and perseverance in the costly labour of restoration. It has been admirably accomplished: and so general seems the renovation, that the building might easily be mistaken for a work of yesterday. The interior is nearly a hundred and thirty feet shorter than that of the Cathedral, but this discrepancy is not so manifest as one would imagine; in consequence of the interposing monument in the choir. The abbey of Benedictines is contiguous; as are the homes, in low dwarfish tenements, of the extreme poor of the population; workers in worsted, whose scanty wages barely suffice to keep them from falling into utter destitution. They throng this quarter of the city. It is remarkable enough to behold half the inhabitants engrossed in concocting the saccharine dainties of Champagne wine and liqueurs.

(Sponge cakes and gingerbread for the "sweet tooth" of France;) and the other half manipulating fleeces, and weaving fabrics which realize enormous profits beyond sea, yet furnish but a precarious subsistence to the ever-toiling hands that card, comb, spin, and dye the same, at home :—

"Sic vos, non vobis; mellificatis! vellera fertis!"

CHAPTER VIII.

RHEIMS : Champagne wine-making—Prices of that wine on the spot—Vin de Bouzy—Enormous consignment of Sillery Champagne bespoke for the Crimea—References, and their issues—Duff Gordon and Sherry—The genuine and un-brandied Champagne wine—Extraordinary wine-glass for effervescent liquor—Café Courtois—Departure from Rheims—Rhetel—A “ Glumdalclitch ” in Ardennes—Attigny : great fertility of the corn district in its vicinity—Vouziers : Buzancy and its *ci-devant* Turkish mosque—Variety of shocking bad carriages—Château de Bayonville—A “ gibbing mare ; ” a wetting, and a blacking.

• THE admirer of ancient house-fronts, quaint carvings, and queer devices on coigne or corbal, will not find so much to amuse him at Rheims as in any town of antiquity in *Normandy* ; but let him not leave this old city without having threaded its narrowest streets, as well as its broadest squares ; whether to see “ the Minstrels ”* in full play in the Rue Tambour, the Place de la Couture, the Place d’Erlon, (named after the General), the Rue d’Etaples, built arcade-fashion, and the Rue Large, in a district

* A fine carving, representing several musicians with their instruments on the front of a house, formerly known as l’Hôtel des Comtes de Bourgogne.

where space and air conduce equally to the health and cheerfulness of the busy population thronging that quarter.

Cathedral towns are proverbially dull ; but this is in no respect the characteristic of Rheims, where, I conceive, a man who knows how to fill up his time rationally, exempt from the racket and excitement of a vast metropolis, might spend many months of delightful retirement ; Nature and Art ministering in turn to his intellectual pleasure.

Monsieur L., my companion for the last day but one of my visit, encouraged this view of the *agrémens* within reach ; and upon what seemed sufficient grounds. My readers, however, will be more interested in the few brief communications made by this courteous gentleman on the concoction and sale of the favourite Vin du Pays, than on the social and scientific circles of his native city, or the charms of the country surrounding it ; though he spoke very much to the point upon both.

After having already detailed so much on this subject under the head of Epernay, I shall limit my statements to the facts that fell under my notice when endeavouring to discover, in the very centre of the producing districts, what constituted the genuine Champagne Wine.

“ You never drink this wine entire,” said Monsieur L. “ Your nation rejects it in that pure and primitive form in which it is drunk in France and many other countries. The Russians consume enormous supplies of it ; and they, of all the Northerners, (and you know what intense cold is felt in Russia), drink it without the slightest admixture of brandy. Whereas, to forty gallons of pure Champagne wine we are obliged, by the requisitions of the British

agents, to add, at least, five, (but more frequently from ten to twelve) gallons of brandy ; while for German orders we infuse half a gallon only in that quantity. We consider the true wine spoilt by this mixture ; but the English palate demands it, not only in Champagne, but in other wines likewise. Here, for instance, is a letter from Duff Gordon, in which he guarantees to me the delivery of a certain quantity of Sherry from Cadiz, without any of the admixture usually introduced, as a matter of course, into the Sherries sent to England.* All our Champagne wine is sweetened artificially ; but *that* is indispensable, as the unsweetened juice of the grape would find no purchaser."

He here pointed out nine casks lying in the court-yard of his premises, containing a ton of white sugar from the Isle of Bourbon ; every pound of which cost ninepence. Hereupon I requested him to show me some of the genuine liquor, in the state, that is, in which it leaves the Pressoir after the regular fermentation processes ; and before the sweetening syrup is added. He presently selected a bottle from some bins at hand, opened it, and poured out a glassful. A more unpalatable drink under the denomination of wine I never tasted. It was like Sauterne mixed with wormwood.

" Now," said Monsieur L., " I have taken out two glasses from this bottle. Here is a bottle of sweetening syrup, from which I will fill up the deficiency you have just seen created."

I witnessed this filling up ; and he then handed the

* Six gallons of Brandy to every butt of Xeres wine.

bottle to a cellar-man who corked and strung it in my presence.

"That," said he, "will, at no distant date, become a bottle of primest quality. It is the Verzenay growth."

I then went into the lower cellars, and had ample opportunity of observing all the processes referred to in Chapter VI. (for the same system prevails, of course, in every establishment;) and then, as a matter of business which may concern others much more than myself, obtained the annexed list of "Prix Courants," or current prices, of the Wines of Champagne bottled at Rheims:

	per bottle.	
	s.	d.
Grand Vin Crémant, (first class cream- ing Champagne)	4	0
Sparkling Verzenay, (finest growth of Rheims)	3	8
Fleur Bouzy	3	8
Sparkling Bouzy	3	3
Fleur Sillery	2	9
Sillery, (first quality)	2	7
Sparkling Aï	2	5
Pink Champagne	2	9

The cost of a case of three dozen of Verzenay, (bottles, case, packing, and cartage to the railway inclusive), would be charged to a buyer in Rheims, seven pounds four shillings. It would be delivered at London Bridge Station for ten pounds, four shillings; the duty being paid in that sum. Thus the total cost would amount to sixty-eight shillings the dozen.

After a busy and very amusing day of inspections and inquiries on this and many other subjects of local interest, I accepted my new acquaintance's pressing invitation to cōme and dine with him and his partner in the firm. We met at half past seven; and very handsome was the entertainment. Among certain curiosities was a bottle of Vin Rouge de Bouzy; a red wine which it was not easy to distinguish from Chambertin. It is grown near Châlons, at about sixteen miles' distance from Rheims.

"One of your English diplomates," said Monsieur L., "purchased a considerable quantity of this fine wine—but not of *me*—at *eight pounds the dozen*. It is far too delicate to travel into your country."

There was a great demand for Champagne Wine from purveyors sending out supplies to the Crimea. These applications came occasionally in a very questionable shape. An order had reached my entertainers a week previously, from Portsea, for ten thousand bottles of Sillery: a reference being given to a certain banking-house at Portsea. On application, however, by Monsieur L's accredited agent in England it transpired that no such firm existed; though a letter, which he showed me, had reached him from a *soi-disant* merchant in Portsmouth, in which the writer, after stating he had been requested to certify to the eminent respectability of the referees, begged to add his ready testimony in their favour. It is superfluous to add that this ready writer proved, also, to be a man of straw; or that Monsieur L. kept his fourteen hundred pounds' worth of Sillery safe in the vaults at Rheims.

"And now," said mine host, "let me offer you some of the best wine we have to boast of at Rheims."

The string and wire were instantly cut, and away went the cork on its aerial travels. Our glasses overflowed with the creamy stream, and my lips with compliments on its unsurpassable excellence, immediately afterwards. It was, indeed, beautiful wine. When all the eulogium which such a creditable sample elicited had been exhausted, and the sober certainty alone remained of having lived

—— “thus to clasp perfection,”

the announcement was quietly made of the bottle, just emptied, being the identical one from which I had endeavoured, in vain, to drink a quarter of a glassful *two hours previously!*

It had not been iced, but placed, after my first introduction to it, in a very cold vault which sent it to table sufficiently chilled, while the thermometer out-doors indicated eighty-five degrees of heat.

This was a pleasant mode of illustration. The syrup renders the wine palatable: the body, the peculiar flavour of the grape, the effervescence and general good condition of the generous draught, are wholly independent of the sweetening ingredient; and it was impossible to conceive how such wine could admit of improvement.

“And yet,” exclaimed my ‘veritable Amphytryon,’* “there is not a drop of brandy in it. You have tasted, what you ought invariably to taste, the pure wine.”

Thus ended my enquiry into the sparkling fluid! I

* “Le véritable Amphytryon est l’Amphytryon où l’on dine !”

should have pursued similar investigations in tasting Pekoe and Bohea Teas, or Jamaica and Barbados Coffees, had my peregrinations led me to China, or to the Isles of the far West; on this principle, that when a traveller is on the spot where a certain popular article is the peculiar production of the locality, he ought not to "*ask no questions*;" but, contrariwise, become more and more interrogatory as his opportunities increase; and contribute all the veracious and sensible answers he may elicit to the general stock of useful information. Some may call it mere gossip; but if such evidence be not authentic, what communications are more likely to convey truth? "When found, let him make a note of it!" Depend upon it, Captain Cuttle was right.

No one should leave Rheims without a glance at the Café Courtois. It is one of the most remarkable creations of its kind, in the whole empire of France. It was established some fifteen years since by a barber, a sort of "Figaro" in Rheims, whose wide connections and popularity encouraged him to open these extensive premises as a place of resort for the notables of the city, at a time when no "Cercle" or club was in existence. There is such a re-union, as the latter term implies, now; and the quality and numbers of the present patrons of the Courtois are proportionately lower; but it is an extraordinary and respectable *rendezvous* still; and the scale upon which it is established may be inferred from the fact of the ground-floor saloon containing four full-sized billiard-tables; and of there being five other in the upper apartments. The decorations of this long room are in the best style of the age of Louis XV., and some of the accessories to its

general grandeur, (which is, at length, beginning to grow dingy from gas smoke,) are of the most costly description, and evince no ordinary taste on the part of the originator. The enterprising *coiffeur-en-chef* engaged one of the ablest architects in Paris to decorate in correct, though florid, style, the entire length of the panelled ceilings and walls of the grand Reception Room; and expended on this department alone three hundred thousand francs. The painting of the panels is of consummate excellence. Davreinville, of Paris, was employed to construct a magnificent self-acting organ, the ebony case of which, wrought in the most elaborate and magnificent carvings, cost two thousand pounds; while the twenty-five barrels, each containing one entire melody, cost the same sum. The arrangement of the thorough-bass on these revolving cylinders, which act upon numerous pipes of considerable power and sweetness of tone, was considered so masterly as to attract all the *cognoscenti* in Rheims to the Café Courtois, where the most delightful morceaux of Mozart, Mercadante, Rossini, Weber &c. used to recreate the ear for upwards of two hours every evening; while the company, seated at the elegant tables ranged all round the room, sipped coffee and liqueurs, and discussed the topics of the day, and the merits of the Maraschino and music simultaneously.

This superb instrument is not heard now except on Sundays, fête days, and special occasions; but, at the instance of my companion, the proprietor of the Café started it into action, and we heard the overtures to the "Gazza Ladra," and "Domino Noir" executed in a style which the best performances of our 'Apollonicon' never, except in

point of power, surpassed. Our National Anthem was also introduced with variations, a minor, and a beautiful fugue; the whole of which was infinitely superior to any music of the kind I had ever heard. The air, "Partant pour la Syrie" followed; upon which I remarked that it was hardly long or dignified enough for the French National Air.

"It is not our National Air;" said Monsieur L. "It is only in vogue out of mere compliment to the Emperor's family; as it has been always accredited as the composition of Queen Hortense."

At no great distance from the organ, under a central arch, is a clock suspended in the encircling folds of a serpent, which an eagle, with expanded wings, is seizing; undeterred by the jet of gas flame issuing from the reptile's mouth: and below this is another fine bronze subject—Mephistophiles, or the unmistakeable Evil One, holding in his right hand a very long Meerschaum pipe, over the huge bowl of which an ape, resting its left paw on an empty bottle, at the demon's foot, elevates a short staff, from the top of which is seen issuing a jet of gas flame. When the mechanism within the pedestal of the figure (which is about four feet in height) was in perfect order, a flow of water used to be seen descending from the wine glass which this Evil genius holds high in air, above his head, into his open mouth.

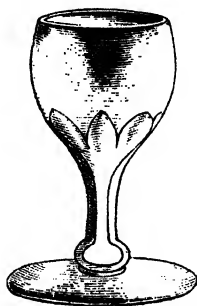
The whole group is of purest bronze, and, both in design and execution, very little inferior to works exhibited in other parts of Europe, as the productions of Cellini and John of Bologna. The first cost of it was extravagant in the highest degree; but this, with the instrument and all

other valuables, passed into the hands of the present owner at less than one fourth of the original purchase.

So much for a stroll through old and new Rheims! I was not prepared to find so much to examine, study, and admire; but have not the least doubt that a longer stay would have enabled me to see and appreciate much more. This reflection, however, bears upon all that a traveller visits *en chemin faisant*. We are compelled to "touch and go;" but nothing can excuse the idleness and absurdity of going here and there and everywhere, and *not touching at all!*

The best friends must part, as the saying is; and I made a farewell call at Monsieur L's a few hours before I bade adieu to Remi Romanorum. On this occasion, he made me a present of a singularly curious wine-glass, contrived especially for effervescent drinks. The stem was hollow, and as it approached the circular flat upon which, like all other wine-glasses, it stood, the cavity of the bulb at its base became perfectly globular. This construction produces a very remarkable effect: that of causing the liquor to continue in a state of incessant agitation. Not only while the full quantity is in the glass, or half, or a quarter of it, but, even while any remains in the stem, a column of fixed air is seen ascending, and keeping up a sparkling action which gives the keenest relish to the wine, cider, perry, or any similar beverage that the glass may contain. Monsieur L. said this arose from the ascending spirit meeting resistance on every part of the hollow bulb. The degree of sprightliness communicated to effervescent drink by this simple construction, is hardly conceivable; and I sent the glass to Bristol, with en-

quiries as to the feasibility of its being introduced into these renowned Gloucester glass-blowers' school of design. It was returned to me with information that any quantity could be supplied at seventeen or eighteen shillings the dozen.



S.M.

After my recent initiation in the mysteries of Verzenay sec, and Verzenay mousseux, and the "Doctor" cup of syrup, I thought my French friend's parting glass a very appropriate keepsake.

A passage in the Hand-Book had induced me to shape my course towards the remote secluded bourg of Buzancy, to see the "Mahomet," or mosque, built by Pierre l'Angluré, by virtue of a compact made between him and the Sultan, in the days of the Crusades, which obliged him to raise a Turkish temple in his native home, in consideration of his release from captivity, as a prisoner of war living among the Saracens.

This excursion would take me altogether out of the way; but the inducement was peculiar, and over-rode any

ordinary objections: I accordingly secured a place in the Malle Poste, or mail, to Rhetel; and having started at the appointed time in the evening, began to traverse an extent of flat, chalky, white country, called the Pouilleuse, cropped with large breadths of corn, but presenting no features of uncommon interest. The department of Ardennes is entered near a place called Isle, hardly ten miles distant from Rhetel, a neat little town of about seven thousand inhabitants, on the river Aisne, whence a mail would convey me in the morning to Vouziers. We did not reach Rhetel till nearly ten o'clock, and then drew up at one of the most unprepossessing houses of call for travellers *à pied ou à cheval*, I had seen for many years. It appeared desirable neither to eat in, nor to sleep in; but great was my surprise, upon leaving the master, mistress, and their daughter, and a helper or two, in occupation of the only place in which any one having entered the house could stand or sit, and where the mere idea of any refreshment seemed a mockery—to find myself in possession, when I had stumbled up to the head of a dark stair,—of a spacious, well appointed room, the floor of which was of inlaid oak, (*parquet* fashion,) the walls lined with a handsome flock paper; and containing a bedstead of scroll iron work, painted to imitate mahogany, which would have borne a very seemly appearance even in a *chambre à coucher* in Paris. The clean, white quilt was surmounted by a feather case covered with crimson silk, like the Eider down bags so common in German bed-rooms; and the curtains were suspended from a gilt sceptre of right royal pattern. Remembering, nevertheless, the dingy complexion of men, women, and things below, and the very

questionable aroma arising from every dirt-coated step of the musty stairs, I began to speculate on the chances of some most unenviable companionship, under the sway of that sceptre, before dawn; but my surmise was incorrect: The bedding was of excellent materials, white and scentless as snow; and I slept soundly, alone.

The *fille-de-chambre* five feet nine inches high, and robust in proportion, seemed to be proud of this State Bed Chamber; and deposited a flaming mould candle on the dressing-table with a sort of flourish, as if the Post House of Rhétel had achieved greatness, and could exhibit more; which was likely enough: for such French houses of entertainment as these must be viewed like truffles; if we judge them by their colour, we should have nothing to do with them. She bade me, however, a civil "good night," laying on me an injunction to be up and stirring at four o'clock, to set off with the courier to Vouziers. This was made a matter of certainty by the giantess returning at half-past three, with a word and a blow—the blow coming first—against the door—to "murder sleep," and bid me use all dispatch, because the mail was to start *là bas*, (down street), and not from the house in which I was lodged.

When, being in marching order, I enquired who was to convey my luggage, this Glumdalclitch of Ardennes caught up, and marched off with, my two valises as if they had been babes of twelve months old, and never loosed hold or halted till we stood beside the wheels of the *voiture des dépêches* of Vouziers.

Edward's Captain* would best have bespoken her capabilities :

" I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats,
But if it be man's work, I'll do it !"

Strong and good-natured was she as the horses of her own country ; and, I believe, had never seen a man from mine before ; and calculating on the attractiveness of the quarters, where her wooden clogs are clattering at this moment, I should imagine she will not see another soon. Who but such a misguided man, as I soon found myself to be, would ever set foot intentionally in Rhétel !

" Now am I in Arden : . . . When I was at home, I was in a better place : but travellers must be content."†

As for the mail, it was half-phaeton, half-biscuit cart ; holding two passengers, and painted *en guèpe*, (wasp pattern, yellow and black) after the style of an Austrian sentry-box—and had been launched only the day before. The metal springs were well placed, and the wheels very light ; and we were assured of reaching Vouziers at a quarter past seven.

Our journey lay Northward, through a dull, melancholy tract of land as open as the plains of Cambridgeshire, in which wheat, barley, and oats, were growing in great abundance ; but still *green*. The Ardennes canal lay to the left ; the Aisne beyond. As we advanced, the face of

* Shakspeare's " King Lear," Act v.

† Shakspeare's " As You Like It."

the country began to assume the features of Belgium, towards the frontiers of which we were travelling. Wide undulating plains covered with wheat stretched far into the distance, many a mile: no hedge timber being visible in any direction; and valleys all verdant with waving barley, or heavy crops of lucerne, varied the tract of arable land which accompanied us to Attigny; the productiveness of whose fields of many thousand acres is said to exceed that of any corn-growing district of France; insomuch that, be the season genial or adverse, the *yield* is ever remunerative, and the soil so kindly as to require little or no manure, after successive cereals.

My fellow passenger affirmed that if we were to enter the standing crop, at harvest time, and pluck the ears, the smallest number of grains in any one ear would exceed seventy; the *average* would amount to ninety-five. Vouziers was the chief market; and five thousand sacks of wheat had been pitched there on the Saturday previous; the greatest part of which had realized three pounds seventeen shillings a quarter; (the bushel weighing sixty pounds). This is a tremendous price for France; but later accounts showed that there was a deficiency of, at least, two millions of quarters in the 1854 harvest of that country; and but for the unprecedented surplus in America, the most deplorable results might have been apprehended.*

The Justice of the Peace and the town-bailiff of Attigny seem to be, nevertheless, of opinion that every man may subsist by work or wit; and announce on large boards, at the two extremities of the village, that "Toute mendicité est interdite à Attigny." In a country where there is no

* France imported, in 1855, wheat to the value of £4,912,000 sterling.

Poor Law, this interdict, common as it is in France, must impel many to help themselves *in more senses than one!*

Vouziers at length came in sight, with its picturesque church and a background of hills that Gaspar Poussin, or Francesco Mola, would have rejoiced in. The triple arched portico of this church exhibits features of Spanish architecture; and the whole edifice would have appeared more in keeping at Valladolid or Seville, than on the banks of the Aisne. It was transferred, much too hastily, to my sketch-book; but the courier was as inexorable as Time and Tide, and raising cloud after cloud of greyish-white dust as he galloped onward to the Post-office, thought, probably, that no picture could compete with the sight of a hot breakfast—no claim of Art or Archæology excuse his arrival at the Bureau *after* time. We arrived, therefore, with all laudable punctuality, only to learn that the coach had started, with a full complement of passengers, and that in *twelve* hours' time there would be a second departure. As there would have been no earthly use whatever in paying a visit to the ancient Mosque at night, when I had travelled so many leagues to make a drawing of it by day, I instantly enquired whether there was such a thing as a *petite voiture* in which I could reach Buzancy, and pursue my journey.

"Ah! oui! there was *the* calèche," said the post-master.

The incredulous smile of his ostler, and the astonishment of his better-half, at the bare suggestion of that carriage, hardly prepared me for my introduction to so startling a presence. At a rough estimate, it might have been built

at the outbreak of the great Revolution in 1789, and, as troubles increased, laid up, like a hulk in harbour, during the whole of the long war, till travellers should re-appear, and the Continental Post-roads resume life and activity. Being, in all probability, pronounced too ungainly and unpresentable to do business with in 1815, it must, at that date, have been remanded to its prison-house and cobwebs in the third stable, for the forty years next ensuing, till drawn forward this morning and shown to me, as Monsieur Dessin's "*désobligeante*" was shown to Sterne in 1767, though *he* appropriated it to no other purpose but the writing of a Preface.

It resembled the sort of one-horse chaises represented in old prints of the reign of Louis XIV., when perruques, velvet coats as broad as blankets, swords and ruffles, or dome-shaped hoop petticoats, required forty inches, instead of twenty, to each seat; and the *intérieur* of a French stage must have been of the dimensions of a boudoir. However, after due inspection of axle and linch-pins, I gave a signal for the launching of this antique high-dried vehicle; the most adust and unvarnished framework for the transport of man I ever beheld; and as it creaked and cracked all the way from the *remise*, ejecting at a moment's notice the many aged spiders, wood-lice, moths, centipedes and snails, which had been quiet lodgers in its threadbare linings from the beginning of the present century, I scanned its capabilities of retaining me under its five square feet width of leather apron, in case of a sudden break down, or gradual crumbling, before my arrival at Buzancy. There was a good deal of life, however, still, in this old performer, whose joints, like those of the sturdy Ardennes

mare that drew it, seemed to relax, and become more and more supple as the heat increased and the grease began to flow ; and we accomplished the first five, out of the twelve, miles of journey in a jaunty style of progress which seemed to reproach me for disparagement and injurious suspicion, and make me distrust first impressions.

These few miles lay across a country as thoroughly English in appearance as Hampshire itself ; with exception of apple and pear-trees standing in the *midst* of wheat crops ; the invariable usage in French farming. Some little way further on, we drove through a simple pretty village containing about four hundred inhabitants, called "La Croix." Seeing upwards of twelve scaffoldings in various parts of the short street constituting the main thoroughfare of the village, and blackened ruins behind them, I enquired how it could have happened that so many houses should have been burnt singly, instead of falling a prey to the flames in continuous succession ; as is generally the case when a town is on fire. It appeared that an evil-minded miscreant had on seven occasions, in the course of the last three months, carried combustibles by night to these several parts of the street, and, rejoicing like our "Fire Martin's" brother, in conflagrations, had caused the destruction of upwards of fifteen dwellings. He was at length detected, prosecuted, and transported for life ; but, upon the old Roman's equitable principle that nothing could be juster in law than that the artificer of such deadly injury should perish according to his own peculiar craft and process of inflicting it, one is inclined to wonder how the infuriated inhabitants refrained from pitching the wretch into one of his own bonfires.

At three miles and a half distance from Buzancy we entered Boux-aux-Bois, a vast district of Crown Lands, now called the Government woods and forests, chiefly of oak; and on the confines of these plantations we stopped to bait; having lost but one screw, one buckle, and a strip of carriage-lace: the latter had most probably been eaten through by "certain politic worms" before the Congress of Laybach; but, under all circumstances, I considered this "splendid travelling."

The wood-side was bordered by large meadows where the hay was not yet made, though the third week of July had begun; but the difference of climate in this Northern extremity of France is strongly marked, and the wheat harvest would be carried a full month later than in Burgundy, as I subsequently observed. A cold, grey sky lowered overhead, and till eleven o'clock there was but little of the comfort of summer temperature, under favour of which we made our *début* at Buzancy, a straggling village comprising nearly twelve hundred inhabitants; none of the cleanest. It seemed a forlorn, stagnating spot; though, as is said of many an old chair or crone, it evidently must have seen better days; for I perceived in two or three places the remains of a breast-work, and what seemed a platform for artillery. But, alas! for "The Mahomet," the Mosque, in quest of which I had made such a *détour*:—Not a vestige of it was remaining. On the site occupied by it, about twenty years ago, was raised a plain, ugly, stone building about eleven yards in length, forming a double dwelling-house, one end of which is fitted up for a parish school. The original edifice, the

reputed Mosque, was built of red brick, and was pulled down in the year 1835, on the incontrovertible utilitarian principle that two regularly paid rents were preferable to the most romantic recollections which neither kept the crazy old relic in repair, nor enriched the owner in the village. I thought I saw my Hand-Book blush a deeper red as I closed it despairingly at the *dénouement* just related; but *we* gentlemen *en voyage* are the parties really open to censure, who, on personal knowledge thus gained, ought to transmit information to the editors of Routes and Itineraries, and keep them *au courant* not only of what is changed or new, but of what has ceased to exist.

Hereupon I took a last lingering look and farewell of that immortal "Shandradan" whose every croak between Ardennes and the Meuse seemed to exclaim "Never say die!"

The wheels had not caught fire; the axle had not snapped; the near shaft which had undergone amputation, possibly before I became a pilgrim and a stranger upon this earth, had not succumbed to the force of uncontrollable circumstances; and, I doubt not, the discovery made this day of its ability to gather money as well as dust, and of my entire satisfaction, as reported by the driver, must have rendered my visit to the owner a subject of special surprise and self-gratulation.

The job-master at Buzancy called my "lone and hurrying car" by many queer and hard names as the last items of luggage were at length detached from its front, back, and interior; but the "trap" into which he decoyed me,

under the name of a phaeton, for my sixteen miles' journey to Varennes, was by no means an improvement of the occasion; as the phrase is. It bore the appearance of two small garden-seats placed one before the other in an empty packing-case painted dark blue, with here and there a pad of cloth and some worsted trimmings to suggest the idea of a carriage, which was corroborated with some degree of success when the huge leather apron was unfurled, and made to buckle over the knees of the driver and his fare. In this *voiture particulière* (the term was very appropriate) about which it was useless for the *hírer* to be *particular*, I started at twenty minutes to twelve o'clock for Varennes en Argonne.

The road lay across an open undulating face of corn-growing country, presenting no features of interest, till, upon reaching the little hamlet of Bayonville, and turning off from it at right angles, we came upon a very ancient grey stone-built château belonging in by-gone days to Baron de Londreville (London Town?) and still in possession of a branch of that family. It was of the date of the early part of the fifteenth century, displaying an inordinately lofty slated roof, and at each angle of the main building a round tower, surmounted by the high-pointed extinguisher-pinnacle characterizing the castle-shaped mansions of that remote period. The many evil days on which, in successive dynasties, the high aristocracy of France have fallen, took from the owner of these lordly habitations the broad lands and seignorial territory which originally encompassed them, and left many such venerable homes destitute of even so much court of entry.

as would serve for the straw-yard of a substantial farmhouse. I saw a hay-stack standing within twenty yards of the porch.

They are saddening objects, those antique domiciles and semi-fortresses of the *haute noblesse* of the days of Charles VII. when such gallant spirits as Arthur, Comte de Bretagne, Dunois, (who fought at Joan of Arc's side), Gaucourt, and La Hire, carried the banner of France and victory "in the high places of the field," and hung up their good swords and pennons in ancient halls and armouries embosomed in groves and glades; or dimly seen through chases and mile-length avenues, of which not even the sites are now known.

The country beyond this point was ugly enough; and in the immediate neighbourhood of the iron mines every village seemed to gather blackness, and eschew clean living. The main street of one (called, if I remember rightly, Romans), resembled a very slovenly farm-yard; immense heaps of smoking manure being piled on either side of the thoroughfare; and not only every part of the roadway, but many of the thresholds of the clay-built cottages, lying saturated with the dark and noisome fluid oozing copiously from such accumulation. The state of the weather aggravated this condition of things in no light degree; and at the widest open space through which we dashed, as the first threatening drops of a thunder-shower began to fall, the whole surface of the ground was as completely flooded by the liquid deposit just mentioned, as if a pond of *café noir* had overflowed its boundaries, and inundated the whole village.

Leaving this unsavoury spot, and Grandpré to the right of it, we began to encounter the storm amidst ruts and hollows that threatened, every minute, an upset and broken springs, if not *limbs* ; and it was evident from her gibbing *chassées-croisées*, and, what Sir Toby* would have termed, “ passy-pavin measures,” as we began to take the worst hill, that the mare in the shafts contemplated coming to a parley with the elements, and asking breathing-time before plunging down the declivity. By dint, however, of those ejaculatory remonstrances which appear so eminently successful on French coachmen’s lips, and of such *argumenta ad equam* as a strip of whit-leather, (called by courtesy ‘the whip’), enabled an English hand to employ, we prevailed on the disgusted animal to abandon her plan of settling down upon her haunches till the rain should have ceased ; and thus we dashed in with desperate speed, a well-drenched trio, through an opened barn-door at the foot of the long hill debouching on the village of Fleville, through which the main road passes that leads from the capital to the Belgian frontier.

In this welcome shelter my driver drew forth from under his crazy carriage a bag of corn, and invited the dripping-wet mare to dine, and forget her grievances. I wore that day a pair of dust-coloured overalls, suitable to such rough cross-road travelling, and cared not for their being most impartially soaked ; but the Devonshire mechanic who had “ touched up” my two portmanteaux, (one a cantine, the other a wardrobe), when repairing straps and sewing on buckles, had topped up his handiwork with an until now

* Shakspeare’s “ Twelfth Night.”

brilliant coat of bluish blacking or size, the whole of which I now found transferred, by the continual leaks we had sprung in the storm, to my legs ; and in this South-down, or Norfolk-sheep-like trim, I alighted, about an hour afterwards, at the “ Grand Cerf,” or “ White Hart,” in Varennes.

CHAPTER IX.

Arrival, in 1855, of an unacknowledged sovereign at Varennes in Argonne—*Locale* of the arrest of Louis XVI. in 1791—"Le grand monarque," and changes of dynasties and portraits—Monsieur L'Abbé Gand, incumbent and dean of Varennes—A long walk and talk; hints about cash-pockets and under-waistcoats; and an evening with him.

MANY of my readers may often have seen cabinet pictures by Gerhard Douw, Ostade, or Jan Steen, of a woman with a close cap, white kerchief and tucker, and short sleeves, holding up a fish, or scouring a brass cauldron,—“fair, fat, and forty,”—good-nature brimming over in her lips and eyes; and the wish to please being her regulating movement. If such counterfeit presentment of a *bonne femme*, according to the most expressive meaning of the French term, had walked out of the Dutch canvas or panel, grown into life-size, and stood before me with a welcome to Argonne, the bonâ-fide flesh and blood [not forgetting the bones] would not have been a more startling realization of the imagined form than was Marie Jeanne Cordonnier, wife of the Aubergiste tenant of the “Grand Cerf” at Varennes. Even after the long interval

of time that has elapsed since my sojourn there, it is absolutely pleasurable to recall the images of that notable, kind-hearted creature, and the single-minded, obliging, honest man whom she pointed out as "*mon mari !*" They said I was the first Englishman that had been seen there for many long years ; a declaration which I had soon ample reason to accredit as a positive fact ; for, when, upon opening my purse to pay twelve francs to the driver, I found I had no French gold, nor more than five or six francs in silver, and accordingly tendered to my host one of our English sovereigns for change, the first sight of the piece attracted a mingled group of busy and idle occupants of space in the picturesque kitchen, where our first greetings had been exchanged, — [the *première entrée* into all such provincial little hostelries in France being, invariably, the cooking apartment,] — all persons pressing around me for a sight of Queen Victoria's head, but altogether incredulous as to the Sovereign being a *coin* of our realm ! Our gold pieces, it may be observed, bear no inscription (as the foreign do) indicative of their value. The universal opinion went only so far as to consider it a pretty *medal* ; but, as to its passing for money, *that* was *toute autre chose*. There was no bank at Varennes, no merchant, nor broker, nor money-changer ; but I was advised to try at five or six houses of parties who carried on business in corn and wine, and who, possibly, might be induced to *buy* it at a risk !

I found four of these worthies at home ; but no asseveration of mine could prevail upon them to give me a sol for my gold piece, which, they said, was, no doubt, a popular pocket-piece in my own country, but of no value in France, beyond the carat of fine gold it might contain. When I

affirmed that I had received twenty-five francs and three centimes for such a coin, only six days previously in Paris, they simply remarked, with a shrug of the shoulders, that the precious metal dealers in Paris would buy *anything* !

After my first scamper round the town in fruitless search of change, I returned to my starting place to arrange for the payment, in some shape, of the driver of the blue *droski*, bemired and travel-stained as chariot and charioteer were, after our rough ride ;—but he was already off on his way homeward ; paid by mine host, who said he was sure we should contrive, sooner or later, to effect negotiations ; though *that* which I called ‘ coin ’ would, he feared, never find a customer. But I was now counselled to call upon some four or five other fellow townsmen he had been thinking of, who, having been great travellers, [one especially, had been to New York] might, possibly, know what I meant by a twenty-shilling, or twenty-five franc piece, and give me a proper consideration for it. Accompanied, therefore, by a retainer of the Inn, I recommenced my enquiries, meeting with no success in the first instance, but being admitted, in the fourth, to an audience in the bureau, or counting-office, of a Monsieur Georges, a corn-mill owner on the banks of the Aire, which runs through the town, and who, in presence of a clerk, foreman, and two chance visitors, declared his perfect willingness to have the honour of seeing my curious coin,—a sort of money he had never heard of, and my estimate of which he could not but regard as a delusion, forasmuch as in the course of fifty years of active business he had never seen such a gold piece ; no, neither in the French, nor in

the Belgian corn-markets. When Monsieur Georges and his party had scrutinized through eye-glasses and spectacles my shining new sovereign, as if they were officers of the Pix and scrupulously assaying its genuineness, he politely handed it over to me, regretting, with a low bow, his inability to do anything in the matter; no, not even at ever so great a discount. It was *monnaie inconnue*, and valueless to him and to his correspondents; but I might try Monsieur Richart, the Commissary of Police, who, *possibly*, might have heard of such pieces, and would try to help me in my dilemma.

Meeting with this rebuff from the Miller and his men, whom I had been led to believe I should find better disposed towards the precious metal, I started again, with a mealy faced messenger from the hopper side, who was to conduct me to the Commissaire, with a good word from the man of flour, suggesting a *deal*; as Monsieur Richart was the busiest man in the town, and knew something on all subjects. I met this worthy in the main street, and opened my purse and subject *instantér*. Monsieur did him too much honour by such a reference; he was flattered by the compliment; he should be charmed to see so strange a piece. "Ah!" and so this was "un Souverain!" Indeed, and worth twenty shillings in my own country. Ah! he had heard of shillings; they were worth twenty-four sous of France; but, still, this gold *medal* would not be found serviceable to me *en voyage*: I must get gold Napoleons, and *petite monnaie*, and I should never again encounter such obstacles and annoyance; and, hereupon, returning into my hands the rejected coin, he instructed my escort to take me to

Monsieur Pierre Ferraux, that *he* might examine and *purchase* it, if he liked the venture; and be sure to try Monsieur Dulphy, Secrétaire de la Commune, who had seen a great deal of the world, and, like Horatio, was “a scholar,” and possessed a good library; and must, doubtless, know what money passed current in Great Britain.

M. Ferraux was not at home. His house, as I subsequently learned, is the most interesting, in respect of historical reminiscences, in the whole town:—but Monsieur Dulphy admitted me to immediate audience. On my presenting the golden image and superscription to his notice, he absolutely shrank from it, holding up both hands, as if it had just been taken out of the fire, and I was intent upon burning his fingers. Being, however, persuaded to touch it, and look our Queen in the face, he said it was *a very pretty medal*, well cut and of good colour; but when I asserted my pretensions to twenty-five francs in exchange for it, he laughed out-right—the whey-faced loon at my side joining in the cachinnation—and asked me whether I was serious; but, said he, if it be really a coin in Europe, I have a book here in my library which ought to give some account of it,

“And can produce it:”—“Pray, Sir, do!”

were the words rapidly exchanged between us; and Keeley or Buckstone might have copied a good face in his, when, upon turning to a printed table of the ‘Coins current in Great Britain and Ireland,’ he found the English sovereign described as equivalent to twenty-five francs and twenty centimes of France!

“Alors! Monsieur a bien raison! En effet c’est une

bien bonne pièce !” exclaimed the emissary from the mill.

I was convinced *this* performer in the farce had, till then, suspected I was trying to hoax the whole town with my *pocket-pieces*. But it was a very empty triumph ; not a soul would my man, with his huge tome on Numismatics and his full conviction, advance upon the hapless, beseeching Queen’s effigy. It would be useless, he said, to attempt to circulate it in that district. At Verdun market no such money was known ; (which was not true), and, this being the case, I could not expect to make anything of it at Varennes. Having thus exhausted enquiry, and well-nigh patience, too—unable to buy, sell, or exchange, I wended my way back to the White Hart with the intent of dispatching a missive to Monsieur Laffitte, whose good agency would soon have altered the ‘colour of my money ;’ for, as matters stood, I found myself insolvent in the midst of plenty !

“ Happy the man, who, void of care and strife,
In silken or in leather purse retains
A splendid shilling !”*

But here was I retaining a splendid sovereign in mine, sorely against my will, and certainly not “void of care” as to the impediments to progress I might have to encounter before my leather purse should reach Burgundy and less primitive people. The strange predicament of their new lodger had gathered a little knot of inquisitives, under the creaking sign of the “Grand Cerf,” who, like

* See J. Philips’s poem, “The Splendid Shilling.”

myself, were expressing their lively astonishment at gold, in any shape, being treated as valueless ; but the wary ones I had addressed seemed to think, with the old saying, that one may buy gold, even, too dear. Our attention, however, was suddenly awakened by a loud voice from the open window of a very goodly mansion opposite, (enclosed within garden walls, iron gates, &c.) summoning to parley one of the gesticulating loiterers with the challenge.

“What now? what’s the matter?”

“Bless us!” exclaims Marie Jeanne. — “If there isn’t Monsieur le Curé looking at us all!”

“Monsieur le Curé!” — answered the mealman who had never quitted me, (doubtless speculating on *his* getting some *small change* at last). — “There is a gentleman traveller here, un Anglais, with his *effets* and a purse of money, who cannot persuade any body *en ville* to take it!”

(It reminded me of the old farce, “Who wants a guinea?”)

“Comment, donc! How *can* that be? I should like to see such a man!”

Away runs his interlocutor, and, rushing into the group that surrounded me, announces that Monsieur le Curé would be glad to see me if I would step across the street.

“Ah, par exemple!” says one, — “Monsieur l’Abbé Gand veut bien prendre ces jolies petites pièces d’or.”

Whereupon my fat and fair hostess declared it was now *une affaire finie*. Monsieur le Curé was *un riche*, and a *bien brave homme*, and would arrange matters in an instant. Besides, he would be so glad to make acquaint-

tance with *un Anglais*. In another minute, I was at Monsieur l'Abbé's side. He was in his gown, cassock, and cap, and struck me, at first glance, as a very remarkable personage; one of the handsomest and most prepossessing men, moreover, I had ever seen among the foreign ecclesiastical body in France or Italy. The dilemma into which I had fallen seemed to afford him infinite amusement. He said it had, in fact, thrown him into a fit of laughter, to be told of an Englishman having found his way, at last, to Varennes, and failed to find any one who would relieve him of any portion of his gold! I said, for my part, it did seem not a little absurd that a piece which mostly bore a premium in other places should have been repudiated as my first-rate coin had been, for upwards of an hour and a half, in every part of his parish.

"They would not have repudiated *these*:"—said he, drawing out of his cassock pocket, where they were lying loose, some thirty pieces of twenty francs each, and a few double Parma, or Maria Louisa forty-*lire* coins.

"They did not tell you they had rather not have any of *these*?"

"Now," continued he, "let *me* see your Victoria! A very good head, too! I hope to see her soon:—And very good gold; well stamped. But, look you, all the foreign coins, on our side of the water, bear the declaration of their current value. See! twenty francs on each gold Napoleon. If your sovereign had been marked 'Twenty shillings,' the townsfolk here would not have called your money a medal and a pocket-piece. *I*, myself, never saw a sovereign."

We fell into general conversation after this; the good-natured Abbé having given me a hundred francs in Italian

and French gold for four sovereigns, and informed me of his intention of visiting Paris to see the Exhibition, and probably the Queen of England, whose features he might now take the opportunity of studying before his journey—thanks to my *embarras*. And, in Paris, he said, there would be no running about for *him*, in quest of money-changers; for they knew better *there* how to manage the English in getting rid of it.

“And so, really,” continued he, laughing again most heartily, “they would not take these pieces!”

And I then recounted to him *seriatim* the various repulses I had met, and described the *modus in quo* of each ugly customer in such a manner as to convulse him with the mirth each successive case provoked.

“And you showed them your purse, I dare say, bursting with these ‘Victorias,’ and could not tempt our *hommes de Varennes*!”

“No,” said I, “they saw no money-bag, or pocket-book of mine. I prefer English gold, if I can but carry it; and what I have I carry in this under-waistcoat’s private pockets.”

Upon this he started up, thrust his right hand into my waistcoat, and fastened upon my hip with his left, in so close a grip, that I stood, as in a vice, helpless.

“Now,” said he, “take you good care never to let your hand be seen diving down into that under-waistcoat. You may some day fall in with a party who will evince no repugnance to your Queen Victoria, and, with a *tour de force* like this, (and he gave me such a shake!) insist upon exchanging, not money, but waistcoats with you.”

My friend, the Abbé Gand, Incumbent and Dean of Varennes, stands six feet one inch high, and is robust in proportion. His features bear a remarkable resemblance to those of the late eminent and deservedly popular Cardinal Gonsalvi, one of the finest men in Rome, some five and thirty years since; and, as he held me in his grasp, I felt it would have been no extraordinary effort, on his part, to pitch me bodily out of his library-window, on the first floor of the Rectory House, into the court-yard and garden below; but, as we say of the rough play of favourite horses and dogs, it was only his fun and good-humour; and I suppose a funnier *premier rencontre* between two men, whose united ages amounted to upwards of a hundred and thirteen years, never took place in Argonne; no, nor in all the ancient kingdom of France and Navarre.

“But,” continued the merry priest, “you must, indeed, promise me as much of your company as you can give me, before you leave this place: I don’t think it will rain all the afternoon. You shall come and dine with me at seven, and before then I will show you some of the prettiest points of view in which our little town shows itself. As you say you are a sketcher, I’ll show you such a *coup-d’œil* of vine-growth as you will see in no other parts of France; and if you have a taste for the best wines of our country, you shall have an opportunity of giving your opinion on some of mine which, you may depend upon it, will beat any they can give you at “Le Grand Cerf.” Besides, you are an Englishman, and we must not let this happy chance pass by without a fraternally good understanding.”

The *prevenance*, the kindness and perfect sincerity of all

this was a noble illustration of the Apostolic precept, "Use hospitality;" and both Peter and Paul would have honoured him for the welcome without grudge thus given to a stranger; but as I had bespoken a repast for half past six at the little inn, and was unwilling to countermand an order which had probably given satisfaction there, I limited my acceptance of the Curé's bountiful offer to a promise that I would pay my respects at a quarter to eight, for a social hour; and would meanwhile accompany him on the promenade which, undeterred by the weather, he had proposed; and as a M'Intosh overcoat and a pair of cork soles seemed quite as indispensable, in the present rain, as the close buttoned waistcoat, and concealment of the Queen's face, which he had recommended with such forcible illustration, I equipped myself accordingly, and awaited his appearance at my own quarters.

"Didn't I tell you," exclaimed my Dutch picture, (wanting the fish, only), "that Monsieur le Curé s'empresserait, (would prove himself most eager), to cultivate your acquaintance! Ils vont faire longue promenade, tous les deux, ensemble, *même dans cette pluie!*" she screamed to her husband:—"Ah! comme c'est charmant!"

I was not a little astonished to see him striding, the next moment, across the thick and slab mud of the road, to the inn door, habited still in his gown and cassock, and without an umbrella; wholly regardless of the incessant rain overhead, and of the pale greyish white mire—the soil of the district—beneath; wet and defilement which would have scared even a scavenger from going his rounds, and driven the hardiest road-menders into their cabins, or

wayside holes of retreat.* But off started my sacerdotal Hercules, taking the main road, towards the heights of Montfaucon, [by which I had lately passed on my journey from Buzancy,] at a pace of, at least, four miles an hour, and girding up the skirt of his gown, like another Tishbite speeding to Jezreel, with no more regard to the splash and spattering, "through brake, through bricr," and many a "steep and thorny way," than if we had been treading a "primrose path" in Tempe, or the *tapis vert* of Versailles! It is worthy of remark, and I have heard it frequently observed, that the mass of the clergy in France comprises individuals of larger stature, and stronger thews and sinews, than any body of professional men in the empire, with exception of some of the heavy dragoons in the army. Had my friend, the Curé, been trained to arms, he ought to have headed a regiment of cuirassiers; but *force physique* was the least remarkable distinction of the man. With an apparently inexhaustible vein of humour, which blended all the pleasantries of ready yet chastened wit with the outpourings of extensive and varied knowledge, he would run discursively through the civil and military history of a century; the position and prospects of the reigning Emperor, and His Holiness at Rome; the Satires of Horace, or the husbandry of France! He flagged not for a moment in walk or talk.

As we floundered down crumbling banks, or waded through a land-spring, I heard "the" tall "man eloquent" denouncing popular ignorance, or glorifying our Constitu-

* The cantonniers in France construct little stone sheltering-places, like ovens, on the highway side, to which they betake themselves in a storm, or in sultry midday heat.

tion, prophesying Gospel light to the Moslems, or lashing the cold-blooded *insouciance* of neutral Germany, till he had given his full heart its long desired relief by breathing all this honest zeal or indignation into an English ear. On painting, sculpture, architecture, mechanics, music, Art and Science as taught at home or abroad, upheld in Russia or suppressed in Austria, he delivered opinions and opened new views indicating in no light degree his thorough comprehension of the subject ; and the fluency of his colloquial Latin, in which, when he discovered a *magister artium* by his side, he seemed delighted to indulge, by way of a relish, might have awakened emulation in our Oxford Convocation House.

“ Loquere Latine !” he exclaimed continually, “ boni quoniam convenimus ambo.”*

He said he had conversed an hour and an half with the present Pope, who spoke Latin admirably ; and he thanked me, on this actual occasion, for encountering the trouble (which we English must ever experience) of pronouncing the dead language in an accent foreign to our own. Yet had I done otherwise, my speech would have been, of course, unintelligible to him.

However, at length we stood on the heights of Mont-faucon, where the vineyards ascending gradually from a perfectly flat plain of rich meadow grass, rise to a considerable eminence, (in an angle of elevation a quarter of a mile in length), the upper circumference of which is of a perfect horse-shoe form, and exceeds three quarters of a mile. From this circle, or crescent, rather, the eye looks

* “ Since we happen thus to have met, both expert therein.”

down upon the whole breadth of two hundred and fifty acres, as from the summit of an ancient amphitheatre—the opening left by the abrupt termination of the curve on either side, serving to reveal the town and its approaches and background.

My intellectual companion might well speak of this unique *coup-d'œil* with exultation. Among the numerous valleys and slopes and natural basins I have seen between Girgenti in Sicily and Derbyshire, the Tyrol and Sussex, Switzerland and the Isle of Wight, nothing has approached the singular features and peculiar effect of the scene here referred to.

There are luxuriant *hop* plantations in our own country, to which no foreign growth can exhibit resemblance; and the hop bine and cluster are immeasurably superior to the most ornamental fruit and tendril of the vine; but neither Kent, Surrey, Hampshire, or Worcester can boast of such a self-formed, verdant circus and area as these in the immediate vicinity of Varennes, exhibiting millions of thriving vines four feet six inches high, of richest growth and colour, and so densely planted as not to leave a foot's space uncultivated. Uplifted to the sun in curved and countless terraces, like rows of seats encompassing the vast hollow, the vivid green lines extend in unbroken continuity from one extremity to the other, forming four hundred ranks from the surface of the plain to the ridge of the crescent, and conveying to the imagination a scene of plenteousness and prosperity, in the time of vintage, which may well teach all the force of that emphatic declaration wherein the Earth is said to be *filled* with the goodness of the Lord, and the year's growth crowned with His blessing.

It was really a splendid sight to gaze on, and amply compensated for all the disagreeables of our "different way home" which, like most other short cuts, involved us in worse paths, more dirt and defilement than we had encountered in our ascent; and entailed no little cleaning down and ablution "au Grand Cerf," when I once again had set foot on its threshold. I there learned from the honest couple who bestirred themselves in the preparation of my dinner, that the Curé was possessed of considerable private fortune, and likely to inherit a handsome accession to it: that he was much respected and liked in the town, and had many devoted friends: was a good pastor and powerful preacher, and regarded as a super-eminent man altogether among the Clergy of the Department who shared neither his learning nor his wealth, his good humour or understanding.

All my first impressions and prepossessions were confirmed during the agreeable evening I passed, according to promise, with this amiable and highly intelligent ecclesiastic. His curate, very recently ordained, resided in the house with him; a common occurrence in many dioceses of France: the house being of dimensions that would have suited a family of eight or nine members. He was a quiet, unpretending young man; whose name I remember—but whose features I doubt whether I should now recognize; and his remarks on the various topics of conversation left no impression at the time: so that it may be inferred he was in all points a foil to the portly and powerful dean in the chair who broached many good things in his genial sociability, and, *inter alia*, a bottle of excellent Bordeaux wine of first growth, over which he made many pleasant

and complimentary speeches about England and the English; and the frequent *hob-nobs* with which he elicited my opinion of his Claret, necessitated more than one journey to the bins below; an expedition confided to the old *femme de confiance* who managed the house-keeping.

The Curé had some splendid framed line-engravings in different rooms, and displayed in many points what is called "a travelled taste," and such proficiency in the knowledge of Fine Art as is, of all accomplishments, the most rare among his brethren of the cassock; whose total ignorance on that head has but too often outraged the most complaisant traveller's feelings. He would take no refusal when bespeaking my company at dinner next day; and with this promise I bade him good-night, and walked across the road to the "White Hart" and a snowy white and comfortable bed, alongside of which was stretched a large *wolf's* skin, edged with red silk binding, in lieu of carpet, on the inlaid oak floor.

At breakfast-time next morning I found a little table set out with a half-gallon silver tureen, a silver ladle that would hold half a pint, and a gravy spoon. The tureen was presently filled with boiling milk; and Jeannette, the rough and ready "help," brought in two slices of bread (cut from a loaf weighing twelve pounds, and measuring two feet across), which had been laid on a gridiron over the wood ashes in the kitchen grate, and received the title of "toast." It was in fact a "grill" of bread. A small modicum of strong coffee was served in a yellow-ware jug, or cruet.

It was altogether the drollest spread for a breakfast

table that France could exhibit. The massive silver articles would have attracted attention at the high-table in one of our College halls: the other items might have been found in a Caffre's kraal; nevertheless, mine were sufficiently snug quarters; and the picturesque interior of the kitchen already mentioned (now transferred to my sketch-book) must have suffered no change since the reign of Louis XV.

There is another house on a larger scale and, probably, with higher pretensions, at the corner of the same square, (Place de l'Eglise), where a sign-board swings in melancholy oscillation to invite custom to "Le Grand Monarque," and—

— "tell sad stories of the death of kings;
How some have been deposed, some slain—"

It is an ancient hostelry, and has displayed, at various epochs, on the said board, the head of Louis XIV, (the Grand Monarque, *par excellence*), Louis XV. and XVI., Napoleon I., Louis XVIII., Charles X., and Louis Philippe. The tenant's confidence, however, in the stability of monarchical power seems, at length, to have failed him, on the demise of the seventh ruler to whose physiognomy the ensign of his house had offered homage; and being wearied of sending up aloft the town limner to do and undo, as Presidents succeeded to "Citizen Kings," and Emperors to Republics, has left the sign-board hanging in expressive silence, blank, and un-illustrative; with exception of the three words that declare the name of the inn,

and which the public mind may henceforth apply at discretion.

This house, however, like Chaucer's "Tabard" and Falstaff's "Boar's Head," figures in history; and cannot but be associated, for yet some generations of men, with reminiscences of imperishable interest. And these were the impelling motives that led me to Varennes,—a name inseparably connected with the most prominent and affecting event of a period now only remembered by the more advanced part of the present generation in France or England. It is merely necessary to touch upon a few points of the fearful crisis here alluded to, which exhibit the course of events leading to the destruction of Louis XVI. and the most violent and influential revolution that ever affected the destinies of the world. The Commons having in the year 1789 declared themselves the National Assembly, and the King fluctuating between opposite counsels till he perceived the obvious tendency of the measures pursued to the subversion of monarchical power—an order was issued for assembling the troops around the capital, and the resolution taken which dismissed and sent into exile the celebrated Minister of State, Necker. The Queen and the princes of the blood were regarded as the chief instigators of both these measures; the immediate result of which was an insurrection in Paris which threatened the overthrow of the Government, and perpetrated the most daring acts of revolt, in the height of which the Bastille was attacked, and, after a furious contest, levelled to the ground.

Finding all resistance to the demand of the populace

altogether vain, the king recalled the minister ; and the first deliberations of the council were devoted to the framing of a new Constitution, and the alteration of the whole system of finance. These measures were discussed in the Assembly with tolerable calmness till a scarcity of provisions and general apprehension of famine drove the people into a state of rabid insubordination, under the impulse of which they marched to Versailles, seized the King and royal family, and compelled them to accompany the ferocious multitude to Paris. Hereupon the National Assembly completed their plan of a Constitution based on the principles of a limited monarchy, which Louis swore solemnly to observe ; but the increasing emigration of the clergy, nobles, and members of the royal family led to suspicions of insincerity and dissembling : a feeling of distrust materially aggravated by the discovery that the troops of the line were being formed into an army on the frontier ; (at the instance, it was believed, of the emigrants :) and the popular ferment created by these discoveries led to commotions and excesses, not only in Paris where rebellion and revolution were rising to their most dreaded height, but also in the provinces. These evils, and the surmises which led to them, the King endeavoured to allay by formally announcing to foreign courts his acceptance of the recently framed Constitution ; but all remaining confidence in his good faith was at once annihilated by his attempt to escape into Belgium in June, 1791.

This project was frustrated (within six hours' reach of the Luxembourg territory,) at Varennes ; and to Varennes I had now travelled, sixty-four years afterwards, for the sole

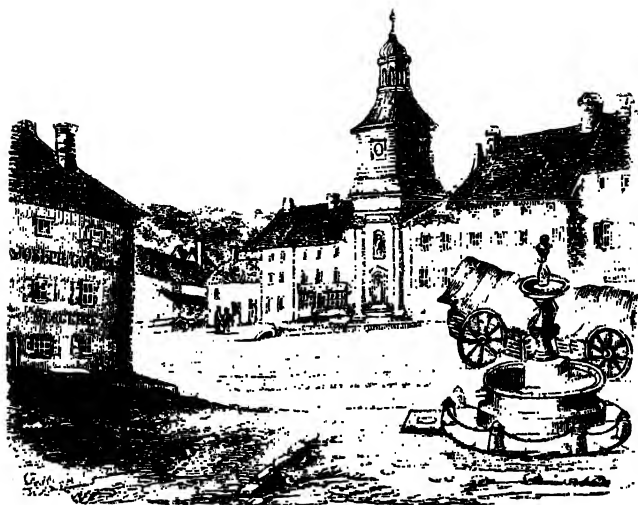
purpose of beholding the spot where the arrest of the fugitive King took place ; aware, as every one acquainted with the leading facts of that memorable period of French history must be, that this single circumstance of his capture influencèd for ever, from that moment, all the principalities and powers, the nations, tribes, and families of Europe and every other civilized portion of the globe.

CHAPTER X.

Transcript from the *Procès Verbal*, or official account sent in June, 1791, to the National Convention, respecting the arrest of the King—Interesting vestiges of the localities signalized by the most remarkable incidents and agents in that fatal proceeding—Louis XVIth's own words and written records in reference to it—Reflections on the event—Dinner with Monsieur L'Abbé and the present Mayor of Varennes—Topics of conversation.

HAVING learned through the Commissaire de Police, to whom I had addressed myself on the day previous, the precise *locale* of Louis the Sixteenth's fatal arrest in the upper square or Place de l'Hotel de Ville, and stood for a few moments on the very steps where, in an evil hour, stood the chief agent of disaffection and conspiracy, previous to his rushing out upon the leading horses of the first of two suspected carriages, I crossed the wide area of ground which has undergone so many changes since that period, and took up a position of shelter from drizzling rain, in the open door-way of a respectable house opposite to the great circular fountain in the centre; and to the church, at the distance of about twenty yards from which

the outrage just mentioned was committed. Two figures are introduced in the annexed drawing to mark the exact spot :—



Under this doorway I sat sketching without interruption from within or without, for upwards of half an hour. At the close of that interval an inner door was opened, from which issued an elderly military looking man, wearing an order, and accompanied by a lady and young gentleman, his son; a handsome youth of about nineteen years of age. Upon my offered apologies for having taken up a station within the porch, they pressed me most earnestly to finish the drawing from their parlour windows; but upon learning that the doorway was the most favorable for my purpose, and that I felt especially interested in the event which had brought the little town of Varennes into

such prominent yet melancholy distinction, the gallant *père de famille* seemed not a little gratified, and expressed his hope that I would allow him to render me a very material service; a privilege, he added, which, since the period of the great Revolution, one individual only, to the best of his recollection, (and that was M. de Lamartine), had been permitted to enjoy; namely, permission to inspect and make extracts from the Procès Verbal or entry of all the proceedings which took place on the never to be forgotten 21st of June, 1791. The minutes of that record were most interesting and affecting, and their authenticity rendered them at this moment of time highly valuable to any party who might be desirous, as he found I was, of comprehending all the circumstances of an event which, it was most true, had not ceased to exert its influences up to the present hour. To secure to me this private view of the document here spoken of, and afford every facility for undisturbed and leisurely examination of it, he would send his son to the residence of Monsieur Genty, the mayor, and cause directions to be given to the keeper of the Archives to admit me, on presentation of my card, to that department of the Town Hall in which such State papers and ancient writings were deposited; and to supply me with ink, pens, and paper, for the making of any copy I might be desirous of carrying away.

This was one of many such acts of courtesy and kindness to which, in common with tourists pursuing similar researches among these highly enlightened and social people, I have been from time to time indebted for correct information, and enlarged facilities of attaining to truth; and such of my readers as participate in my interest in this

peculiar incident of modern history will be best able to enter into the feelings with which I appreciated the opportunity of making the subjoined extract. It was indispensable to condense the matter, here and there; but the main substance is given without a single alteration, and my own explanatory remarks are included in brackets :—

“LE 23 JUIN, 1791. VARENNES.

1er. Procès Verbal de l'arrestation du Roi et de la famille royale à Varennes.

“Il est des scènes qui se peignent mieux au sentiment qu'à la pensée, et donc l'impression même affaiblit la vive imagination. Telle est celle dont cette ville vient d'être le théâtre.”

TRANSLATION.

“There are scenes in life which the feelings of men can far more accurately realize than their thoughts, and the impressions left by which exhaust all the conceptions of the most lively imagination. Of such a nature was the scene of which this town has just been rendered the theatre.”

On Tuesday, 21st of June, at 11 P.M. the Attorney-General of the Commune was suddenly informed by a courier* from St. Menchould, that two carriages, which it

* This was Drouet (son of the postmaster at St. Menchould), who when Louis looked out at the carriage window while changing horses, was so struck by the forcible resemblance his features bore to the effigy on the five-franc pieces and assignats as to feel convinced he was the

was found impracticable to detain at Clermont, would shortly arrive at Varennes, and it was believed that they contained a charge in trust (*un dépôt*) very precious to every French heart. Upon the arrival of these carriages, almost immediately afterwards, the Attorney-General of the Commune demanded of the party inside their passports. A passport was handed over to him bearing the signature of Montmorin, and granted to the Baroness de Kroff and family, en route to Franckfort.

The night was dark, and the towns-people were astir ; and the Attorney-General took occasion to observe to these yet unknown parties in the two carriages, that the disturbance thus arisen, (*l'émotion du moment*), the darkness of the night, and consideration for their safety dictated the course of not pursuing their journey at this hour, and he suggested their accompanying him to his own residence.

They were eleven in all ; five in one carriage, two in another, and four on horseback, as escorts.

Having alighted at the Attorney-General's house, they stated that it was their intention to go to Montmédy, not to Franckfort ; and as though French hearts, ever wont to hold in dear regard the person of their king, were certain to recognize his presence, directly the demonstrations of

King ; and perceiving that the whole party were travelling in strict *incognito*, suspected (what was really the fact) that this could be none other than the royal family proceeding in all haste and secrecy to the frontier, so as to be out of the reach of National authority. On this discovery he mounted horse, and galloped, by a short cut, from St. Menehould to Varennes.

love and respect we so earnestly manifested, were offered, he exclaimed :

“Yes, I am the King :—There is the Queen and the Royal Family ! I am come to reside among you, in the bosom of my children :—I am not abandoning them.”

The tender sympathy and emotion of all parties present, blending with that expressed by the King, the monarch and his august family condescended to embrace all the citizens who were in the apartment, and to receive from them, in turn, the same manifestations of their lively and heart-felt affectionateness. At this moment an individual arrived, stating himself to be an aide-de-camp of Monsieur de Bouillé,* and demanding to speak to the King. Being introduced by the Attorney-General of the Commune, and asked by the King what his name was, he replied :

“I am Coquillard.”†

* The Marquis de Bouillé was a Royalist, a soldier of the old school, and had been appointed, on account of his staunch and resolute loyalty, governor of Metz and Alsace. With a prescience of coming events he had formed a detachment of troops on whose devotedness he thought he could rely ; and on some pretence of field manœuvres and exercises had established a camp at Montmédy. On this memorable night he had stationed a troop of dragoons at Pont de Sommeville and at St. Menehould, to meet and escort the fugitives, but could not carry out his good intents. This Coquillard was a confidential emissary from the Marquis, charged with the momentous commission of letting the King understand that if he could but contrive to linger in Varennes till about eight o'clock in the morning, a regiment of dragoons would be able to reach the town, and cut down all opponents that might endeavour to prevent his flight to the frontier. But the Procès Verbal is very vague on this point.

† The name, correctly spelt, was Goguelot.

“Well and good:” said the King. “When are we going?”

“I await your orders, Sire.”

And the orders were given with concurrence of the Attorney-General, and this officer.

[Here the copying clerk who entered the minutes must have blundered in his transcription of the original writing; for this passage is manifestly incorrect, and conveys no meaning. This Coquillard, doubtless, obtained a few seconds of private hearing; apprised the King of Bouillé's eager wish to send in a regiment to his rescue, and stated at what hour it might be expected; but Louis lost his self-possession, and conveyed to the messenger an impression that the King was almost indifferent whether he went one way or another. The fact was, that he learned from this officer that there must be a desperate fight, in any attempt to cut their way through the town; and resolved not to occasion it.]

The King, nevertheless, manifested anxiety to set off, and at several intervals asked if his horses were ready. A mob of towns-people, and of the inhabitants of the immediately adjoining villages, had, meanwhile, begun to crowd the streets of Varennes; and the intelligence of the King's arrival had been conveyed even to distant localities: There was a general rush, akin to all those impulses of joy and tender anxiety, with which, in the midst of loud expressions of eagerness, a large family would make such feelings known, upon finding a father who had been long missing, and whom they dreaded losing again!

The municipal officers of the town felt that they had

only to direct the King's attention to such a spectacle—such a scene of moving sympathies and disquietude—to awaken the kindly feelings of his heart. They urged, that, loved as he was by his people, his throne was in all their hearts—his name in all their mouths; but that the place of his abode was Paris, to which capital the anxious and urgent prayers of the provinces, at the present period of discord and alarm, were calling back their chief, and all the citizens their sire; that the safety of the State depended on the completion of the scheme of the Constitution; and the safety of the Constitution itself was vitally connected with his return; that blest as they were in the existence of his personal virtues, the French people felt their individual happiness derivable from his own personal well-being; and that their acutely feeling and affectionate hearts would never recognize the pledge and assurance of such felicity, but in the inseparable participation of its enjoyment with him.

Meanwhile, a detachment of the Hussars of Lauzun arrived; thrown with all precipitation into Varennes. (*replié sur Varennes*). Another, a German regiment, that had been in garrison at Stenay, and a troop from the neighbourhood, were reported to be on their way. The first named evinced the most amicable feeling towards their fellow-citizens.

After repeated demands on the part of the King, (as to pursuing his journey,) the municipal officers held a general council, when, just as they were assembling, an aide-de-camp from Monsieur de La Fayette* arrived in the

* Colonel of the National Guards of Paris.

town, bringing a decree of the Assembly, or rather it might be said, of the prayers and wishes of all France, that the King should return.

The towns-people urgently besought the King to consider what bloodshed and misery might result from his departure, and what happiness would ensue on his return ; that all Paris, the National Assembly, and France at large, would greet with the most enviable welcome this fresh assurance of the love he bore to his people.

Yielding, at length, to these passionate and urgent expressions of public feeling, the King and royal family consented to set off; and towards half-past ten o'clock in the forenoon,* and amidst those exclamations of the multitude which it is so affecting to hear, when they issue from combined feelings of liberty and loyal attachment, the party drove off, surrounded by a considerable number of the towns-people on horseback, and by the National Guard; mustering, on this occasion, for the purpose rather of gracing such a triumph of deep feelings, than of constituting a mere personal protection.

The municipal officers who accompanied them as far as

* Here is a remarkable discrepancy as to time. The Second Procès Verbal states it was half-past *seven*. *The King's own diary*, which will be quoted a few pages further, says they left Varennes between five and six in the morning; which accords with the statement on the face of the Second Procès, that it required five hours to induce the King to abandon his project of going to the camp at Montmédy. Having arrived at half-past eleven, and begun to discuss the point at twelve o'clock, (on entering the attorney-general's house,) the final resolve here mentioned would be taken at about the time noted down in the unhappy monarch's private memoranda. The copying clerk must have written "d" for "s"—"dix" for "six."

Clermont, were.” (Here follow several names, and the statement concludes with complimentary expressions of thanks to the National Guard for their good services.)

The second Procès Verbal is considerably more lengthy and circumstantial than the first, and bears date the 27th of June—nearly a week later than its precursor; and is stated in the preamble to have been drawn up in compliance with the desire of the National Assembly, that a more particular statement of details might be sent to Paris for the information of the Council.

Both reports are attributed to Monsieur Sauce, who is therein styled the Attorney-General of the Commune; (Procureur Général de la Commune,) but Madame de Campan, first Lady of the Bedchamber to the Queen, speaks of this man, in her Memoirs, as the Mayor of Varennes, and says he was a grocer; that the Queen sate down in his shop on the ground-floor, amidst the goods, (conceive Marie Antoinette of Austria seated “between two piles of candles!”) and entered into conversation with Sauce’s wife, hoping to awaken her sympathy, and win over both husband and wife to the royal cause at that moment depending on their connivance with the King’s flight. Louis had begun speech at the very first entry into the shop, justifying his journey to Sauce, who, wavering in decision, glanced often at his wife, as if to ascertain her real feelings; but the wife, being certain that Sauce’s privity to the fugitives’ escape would cost

him his head, told the Queen so, and remained inflexible. La Fayette's aide-de-camp, Romeuf, arrived soon afterwards, and all further opportunity was cut off.

Some of my readers may, perhaps, remember a very clever picture representing this scene, in the Royal Academy's Exhibition of the year 1853.)

EXTRACTS FROM THE SECOND PROCES VERBAL.

Colonel de Bouillé was of the regiment called the "Royal German," and he had arranged a plan for the driving of a baggage-waggon along the road, [between Chalons, probably, and Varennes,] as an escort for which, (as though it contained treasure,) forty dragoons would be sent forward from the Camp at Montmédy. The King was to arrive in a carriage, and represent himself to be the colonel of the regiment of Esterhazy Hussars, on his way to the camp.

Bouillé's son and another officer rode into Varennes, in the course of the 21st day of June, saying they were on the look out for the general, who had been expected for some days past.

A lame servant had arrived on the 18th with some horses, who stated that he was come to wait for the Colonel Damas, his master, whose regiment was expected to arrive soon afterwards.

This man, however, got into a carriage which accompanied the luggage-waggon, (already mentioned).

Young Bouillé and the other officer staid the evening at the inn. [This inn was "Le Grand Monarque," mentioned in the preceding chapter.]

At a quarter past eleven on the night of the 21st, there came to the inn called "The Golden Arm,"* Monsieur Drouet, master of the Post House of St. Menehould, [he was not the master, but the master's son] in company with a Monsieur Guillaume, an inhabitant of St. Menehould, mounted on ponies; and they gave information to Le Blau, the innkeeper, that two carriages were close behind, and that they suspected the King was in one of them. The innkeeper, being an officer of the National Guard, ran off to Monsieur Sauce, the Attorney-General, made him get up, and told him all he had just heard; having done which, he returned home immediately, and armed himself. His brother did so likewise. Meanwhile, the Attorney-General apprised the municipal authorities of what was at hand, and proceeded to rouse the whole of his family at home, giving them directions to run to all parts of the town and cry "Fire! Fire!" for the purpose of spreading the alarm, and arousing all the inhabitants. He then took a lanthorn and posted himself in the way by which the carriages must pass.

In the interim, Monsieur Regnier and Drouet had drawn a loaded waggon on to the bridge, and no sooner was this done than the two expected carriages appeared in sight. The two brothers Le Blau stopped the first, a cabriolet, containing two ladies. The Attorney-General, having stepped up to this carriage, demanded the passport of the party inside.† Their reply was, that the passport was in the carriage behind; upon which he immediately went up

* This little inn stood on the spot indicated in the view, at the beginning of the chapter, by two figures on the pavement.

† Mesdames Brunier and De Neuville, principal ladies of honour.

to the latter. It was extraordinarily loaded, and drawn by six horses, a postilion to each pair ; and three persons in yellow coats were seated on the coach-box.* The brothers Le Blau, and several other individuals, (among them the *Sieur Coquillard*,) were all standing armed, at the door entrance of the "Golden Arm." The Attorney-General enquired of the second carriage party whither they were proceeding, and held up his lanthorn in order to discern their features. They stated themselves to be on their way to Franckfort.

"But," said he, "if you come from Clermont, you are going quite out of the way that leads to Franckfort."

However, be that as it might, he added, he must see their passports. They asked him of what rank he might happen to be ; was he a National Guard ? He said he was the Attorney-General of the Commune. In his survey of the group, he observed there was one male passenger, two ladies, and children. On careful scrutiny of the countenance of the man, he was thoroughly convinced of his being the King, from whose hand he at length received the passport, and then proceeded to read it aloud in the presence of the municipal officers.

The passport having been remanded to Clermont does not appear in this *Procès Verbal*. The Baroness de Kroff

* These were the three body-guards—Valory, Dumourier, and Malden, who left Paris with the royal party, and had originally started on horse-back, and in whose stead, as their horses could not hold on through the hurried journey, the incognito fugitives probably engaged outriders at the *relai* ;—as the first *Procès Verbal* mentions four persons on horse-back, acting as escorts, when the carriages arrived. It is impossible, otherwise, to explain this appearance on the coach-box.

was stated to be on her journey to Franckfort with her family, her valet-de-chambre, and others; signed Louis, and countersigned Montmorin.

The Attorney-General said it was too late at night to get a passport examined and countersigned (*visé*); that it would be imprudent to proceed; for not only were the roads very dangerous to travel along, but the rumours now astir were of too serious a nature to admit of their going forward.

[What follows here is much the same with the account detailed in the first Procès Verbal, up to the point of the whole party's entry into the Attorney-General's residence. Mention is made of one of the ladies-in-waiting being taken ill, and of a medical man prescribing for her. This was a feint with a view to cause delay, but it failed.]

Upon the travellers' entry into Mr. Sauce's house, Monsieur Destez, Juge de Tribunal (Judge of the local Criminal Court) was sent for that he might come and identify the King, which, on his arrival, he did.

Bouillé's forty dragoons reached Varennes just about this time, (continues the narrative), but found themselves out-numbered: the people, also, had erected barricades at every entrance into the town, and brought out two pieces of cannon.

[The substance of what passed in the apartments of the house where the fugitives were detained has, for the most part, been given in the first extract.]

The words actually uttered by the King, as he threw himself into the arms of the Attorney-General, were:

“ Yes! I am your king! After living in the midst of the

capital among daggers and bayonets, I am come to seek in one of the provinces, and among my faithful subjects, that liberty and peace *you* all enjoy: I can no longer remain in Paris, except it be to die there; and my family, too."

It required five hours to induce the King to abandon his project of proceeding to the camp at Montmédy, from which quarter he vowed, on the word of a king, he would not stir with a view to quitting the country; and he added, they might, if they chose, accompany him.

While this was going forward, the young aide-de-camp threatened to cut down all before him with the forty dragoons, and so provoked the major of the National Guard, as to cause that officer to discharge his pistol at him. The explosion making the horse rear violently, and then fall, the aide-de-camp was too disabled to act further: upon which the forty troopers expressed their desire to be placed under command of any officer of the National Guard, and quietly submitted to orders.

Another detachment of cavalry, presently after this, arrived at the entrance of the town, but could not succeed in penetrating at any inlet; and when the carriages eventually had taken the road to Paris, and had cleared Varennes, amid shouts of "Vive le Roi!" "Vive la Nation!" another squadron of horse came up with them, headed by the Marquis de Bouillé himself and Marshal de Broglie; but the body of mounted National Guard escorting the carriages was now so numerous as to deter this force from attacking them.

[It is not a matter of astonishment that the poor boy, the Dauphin, who was one of the children mentioned as forming part of the group of fugitives, should have succumbed to the fatigue of a long and harassing journey; deprived as the child was of natural sleep. The Report states that he fell into a sound slumber; Madame also: (this was the Princess Elizabeth, the King's sister; guillotined in May, 1794). But that Louis himself, when liberty or caption, life or death, were in the scale, should have actually fallen asleep in such a "*laissez aller*" condition of mind as would have seemed remarkable even in a traveller impeded on a sudden in his rapid journey by disappointment of relay of horses,—indicates either considerable physical weakness, or the most cold-blooded impassiveness. I shall in due course show that the latter was by far the most probable condition of the man. He rued it dearly in the issue, for it cost him his life.]

The extracts, however, here given, comprehend all the leading and really interesting facts of an occurrence which led to the murder of four out of the "five" occupants of the second carriage; and although it is evident that some few errors were left uncorrected in the record, and many of the statements framed to answer political and private purposes, the tale still fixes attention; and bearing, as it does, the date of the fatal night on which the flight was detected and cut short, and the impress of the character of its author and attesting corroborators, (for there were upwards of forty signatures at the close), these passages from manu-

script history, crude and ungarded as it lay before me only eighteen months since, will not be deemed an altogether insignificant contribution to the knowledge possessed in a general way of the Arrest at Varennes. The fulsome protestations of loyalty and affection addressed to the unhappy sovereign whose liberty they were controuling, whose person they were seizing, and in whose death, seventeen months afterwards, they, in all likelihood, exulted with all the ferocity of rabid republicanism, are revolting in the extreme; and the high-minded, heroic Queen, at least, must have listened to them with disgust and scorn. Her royal partner may probably have been weak enough to imagine that, after all, matters might take a better turn if Lafayette, who had hitherto treated him with mere cold respect, could be won over to personal regard and friendship.

This very *dénouement* at Varennes would, in all human probability, never have occurred, but for his excessive folly in taking no pains to maintain the assumed character in which, disguised as a waiting gentleman or house-steward, (the *Procès Verbal* designates him as a *valet-de-chambre*; but our word "footman" would be a faulty rendering of the term), he took his place opposite to the Queen and his sister; for, instead of remaining ensconced in a corner of the carriage, and carefully concealing his presence, he persisted in so frequently thrusting his head out of the window as to awaken the Queen's alarm, lest he should speedily be recognised; and it was in one of these incredibly rash acts of folly, while the horses were being changed at the post-house of St. Menehould, that he exposed his very remarkable physiognomy so fully as to con-

vince the young republican, Drouet, that this could be none other than the living prototype of the head circulating in daily currency on the assignats; (paper money then coming into use): and the result has been already stated. Three hours were also lost by the carriage requiring some repair in its springs at the distance of thirty-three miles from Paris; and the King insanely persisted in *walking* up a long hill! The result was that a troop of horse meant for escort into Varennes was withdrawn, and with them all the needful protection.

It transpired, subsequently, that Louis had been recognised, through his own imprudence in gazing about from the open window at Chalons; and that the individual who made the discovery hastened with the intelligence to the mayor, who, happening fortunately to be a royalist, persuaded his informant to stir no further in the matter, but let things take their course. A horseman, also, unknown, rode rapidly by, (very close to the carriage window), exclaiming, without turning his head, "You are discovered."

However, as is well known, the royal family travelled as State prisoners towards Paris; which city they reached at eight o'clock in the morning of the 25th; having, in those days of bad roads, heavy carriages, and much eating, drinking, and sleeping, *en voyage*, taken four days to accomplish a journey of less than a hundred and thirty miles; but which must have appeared to the ardent, high-souled, yet broken-hearted Queen, an interminable period of misery. On reaching Paris her beautiful hair had become silvery white; "blanched by sorrow," at the age of thirty-six!

The subject here brought under my readers' notice, derives no inconsiderable accession of interest from an insight into one of the most extraordinary documents that chance ever threw into the hands of a chronicler, historian, or moralist.* I refer to the Diary of Louis XVI., from the date of January 1, 1766 (when he was Dauphin) to July 31, 1792, ten days only previous to the day which sealed his destruction. This manuscript fell into the possession of a member of the Convention at the period of the general pillage of the royal palaces subsequently to the death of the King; and whether known by their owner to be what they were, or merely left to moulder away unexamined, with large masses of other papers in some lumber-room or cellar, the executors of the Conventionalist disposed of the whole lot, at his demise, to one of the stall-book sellers of Paris. Strange as it seems, this parcel of memoranda and entries remained unnoticed by the dealer, who carried on his literary sale, barter, and exchange in the quarter of the *Marché aux Fleurs*, and was by him disposed of to a picker up of unconsidered trifles who, on careful inspection, recognized the autograph of the King, and hurried off with the whole of his purchase to the house of a friend, who, apprehending the worst consequences from such ownership becoming notorious, persuaded him to tear up the Journal, and maintain silence. This counsel was at once followed; but the torn leaves were not thrown away, nor indeed mutilated to further extent than division down the middle, and in this state they were one day seen

* The reader will naturally recur to the recent discovery of Boswell's Letters addressed to the Rev. W. Temple,—among the waste paper at Noel's (the grocer's) shop in Boulogne.

by Monsieur Alby, a literary collector and writer, and without much difficulty carried away to his own study from whence, about eighteen or nineteen years since, they were contributed in the shape of an interesting article on the Life and Times of Louis XVI., and not long afterwards published in that deservedly popular periodical "Bentley's Miscellany."

When I attributed the King's inclination to slumber, during the proceedings of his arrest at Varennes, to his cold-blooded impassiveness, I had not forgotten the entry made with his own pen against July 14, 1789, the day on which the Bastille was razed to the ground, hundreds of soldiers and citizens were killed, and De Launay's (the Governor's) head was carried on a pike through the streets. The King wrote against this date, "Nothing" (!) and spent the two days next following in *hunting*! But the portion of this unparalleled Diary which is most relevant to the subject of the present chapter, is that comprising the entries made immediately previous and subsequent to the arrest.

The whole of the first fortnight of June, 1791, was employed by the unhappy Queen and the devoted adherents of the royal family in concerting and securing means for their escape from France; and the counsels held by the King, his consort, and their distracted friends, in the private recesses of the Tuileries, must have been marked by apprehensions, doubts, fears, and embarrassments of thrilling anxiety: but Thursday, June 16th, is recorded as affording "Nothing" of any interest.

17th.—"Nothing."

18th.—"On horseback at half past nine in the Bois de Boulogne."

19th.—“ Sunday. Vespers.”

20th.—“ Nothing.”

Now comes the climax !

21st.—“ Left Paris at night ; arrived at Varennes en Argonne, and was arrested at 11 P.M.”

This is a palpable error which the paralysing excitement and despair of the moment may well explain. The fugitives must have quitted Paris on the night of the 20th (not of the 21st,) as the distance between Varennes and the capital, along the old post-roads, was between a hundred and twenty-six or twenty-eight miles, and occupied on this occasion twenty-five hours.

The matter of fact style, however, of the entry, “ was arrested at 11 P.M.,” is not a little characteristic of the writer.

His entries beyond that date ran thus :

Wednesday 22nd.—“ Left Varennes at 5 or 6 A.M. Breakfasted at St. Menchould : [at *Drouet's* most probably] arrived at 10 P.M. at Chalons. Supped and slept.”

23rd.—“ Half past eleven :—Mass interrupted, to urge our setting off :—Breakfasted at Chalons. Dined at Epernay : Met the Commissioners of the Assembly. Arrived at 11 P.M. at Dormans : Supped there. Slept three hours in an arm-chair.”

24th.—“ Left Dormans at half past seven. Dined at Ferté-sous-Jouarre. Arrived at 10 P.M. at Meaux. Supped and slept at the Bishop's residence.”*

25th.—“ Left Meaux at half past six. Arrived at Paris at eight, without stopping.”

* The reader will now more readily sympathise with the interest awakened in my visit to Epernay, Ferté-sous-Jouarre and Meaux.

26th. — “ Sunday :— Nothing at all. Mass, and gallery conference with the Commissioners of the Assembly.”

27th. — “ Nothing.”

28th. — “ Nothing. Took whey (!)”

It may be said these notes ought never to have seen the light; and, perhaps, so far as they affect the repute of their writer as a man of sense and feeling, their suppression would have done his memory good service; for the apathy, the want of seriousness and concern when kingdom and kindred were evidently about to perish before his eyes, and the dynasty of a thousand years was imperilled, if not doomed, in his own person, are absolutely without a parallel in history; though Louis was possibly one of the most upright and best intentioned sovereigns that ever sate on the throne of France. His private worth and public disinterestedness elevated him to an ascendant of moral excellence transcendently superior to the arrogated virtues and glory of republican patriotism; and his faults were derived from the inheritance of that unenlightened despotic monarchy to which he fell a victim; in no single respect from a tyrannical disposition, or the impulses of an undisciplined and ignoble mind.

It was just now shown, under the entry of June 23rd, (the second day of the journey from Varennes to Paris,) that the King met the Commissioners of the Assembly at Epernay. These were Latour-Maubourg, Barnave, and Pétion. The latter was Mayor of Paris; the very man upon whose motion the King was subsequently arraigned and tried before the Convention. Upon quitting Epernay, the royal pair were subjected to the indignity of travelling with Barnave between them, and Pétion opposite, seated with the

two children on one side of him, and Madame Elizabeth on the other.

Barnave conducted himself with respectful deference, as though deploring the circumstances in which he was placed. He applied the term "solemn occasion" to the journey, and won the esteem of all his prisoners: (for in no other light can we regard them). Pétion behaved with studied rudeness; and after demolishing the luncheon of cold chicken offered to him, threw the picked bones out of window in such a reckless disregard of ordinary civility, as narrowly to miss touching the King's face. He likewise cut short all conversation with him by commending the people's desire of Republican government.

Both Barnave and Pétion subsequently fell victims to the guillotine. The former merited a better fate. He stamped on the scaffold, exclaiming, "Is this all the reward of my zeal for the liberty of France!"

After having been occupied for two hours at the Town Hall, I paid a visit to Monsieur Ferraux, in the Rue de la Basse Cour, No. 287, about half-way between the bridge, near the "Grand Monarque" Inn, and the stone steps leading down to the river side from the spot where stood, in the year 1791, the inn described in the foregoing narrative as the "Hotel du Bras d'Or." On the topmost step of that flight stood the two brothers Le Blau, and from that spot they rushed on the first carriage. The Procureur Général, or Mayor, and others were close at hand, grouped at the door of the inn.

Monsieur Ferraux's house is the very one in which Sauce, the smooth-tongued, wily Procureur, (or Mayor), resided at that period, and into which, as has been shown, the King and all his party were conducted after quitting the carriages. The front of the house has been altered and modernized considerably since that event, and it is now a private residence; but the window-frames remain. The staircase has also been improved, and a partition or two put up; but the floor boards are the same, and the dimensions of the two rooms, on the first floor, where all that has been described took place, are still in *statu quo*. The King remained, for the most part, in the front room. The Queen left him, at intervals, when she sought opportunity of speech with Sauce and his wife, below stairs. Princess Elizabeth, Madame de Tourzel, and a lady-in-waiting, with the two children, Princess Maria Theresa, afterwards Duchesse d'Angoulême, and the poor Dauphin, or Crown-prince, (who was *made away with* by atrocious ill-treatment, and died four years afterwards), were in the back room.

The front room is but eighteen feet square, and eight feet six inches in height: the back room, fourteen feet by twelve, and eight feet high, with two large windows. In the shop below, and in these two narrow and confined chambers, thronged by the fugitives, by Sauce, and the numerous individuals represented as pressing around the King to *testify their affectionate loyalty* (!) Louis and his Queen, for whose court and retainers the Palace of the Tuileries had been hardly sufficiently commodious, passed the six agonizing hours intervening between their entrance into Sauce's house, and their constrained departure for Paris.

Extensive travel brings a man to many a remarkable spot, where even the coldest hearts and dullest imaginations must acknowledge the influence of the historical recollections inseparably attaching to it; but there are few localities that could awaken a more affecting interest than these squares, streets, bridges, houses and apartments at Varennes where, with the records of history opened to view, and amid the vestiges and relics of men and things that existed only sixty-four years previously, I traced "the majesty of buried" France through every phase of that dread eventful night, and beheld in my mind's eye the rapid transition of the captured sovereign and his consort from these cells of detention at the chandler's, to 'The Temple,' the scaffold and death.

In the course of the day, I was joined by my new acquaintance, the Curé, who, knowing my eagerness to gain insight into all the interesting localities of this remarkable neighbourhood, took me to the side of the town immediately opposite to that where we had first surveyed the adjacent country; and began, as we quitted the street leading from the Hôtel de Ville towards the road to St. Menchould, by showing me the residence of General Radet, whom Bonaparte sent to Rome in 1809, to arrest Pope Pius VII., on that venerable Pontiff's refusal to execute a renunciation of the temporal estates belonging to the See of Rome.

From the heights beyond this point, he indicated the precise situation of Clermont, the village mentioned at the beginning of the first Procès Verbal in this chapter, and showed me the very road along which the two suspected carriages pursued their course to Varennes, on the 21st

June, 1791 ; to the right of which rose the forest of Argonne, immediately behind which, lay the village of St. Menehould. One road from St. Menehould led to Verdun, and the other to Varennes.

Young Drouet, under the belief that the carriages had taken the former road, had proceeded to some distance on it, and only discovered his error by mere accident ;. hereupon he galloped back, and struck into a short cut, (which the Curé pointed out) ; and so reached Varennes before the arrival of the fugitives. It may readily be imagined how the identification of such places, and the relation of such incidents, on the very scene of their occurrence, enhanced the gratification of exploring this remote secluded corner of France. There are aged men, still living, worthies of their day, whose hearts beat high, and whose eyes moisten at the bare mention of the word "Varennes," and though there be none now left in it to tell the tale as cotemporaries and witnesses, there may still be found among its inhabitants, grave, reflecting citizens, who regard the failure of the flight from Paris as chief of the most melancholy events that ever befel their country.

My host at dinner to-day expatiated on what he termed the rascally conduct of Monsieur Sauce, who lives in inglorious memory as the betrayer of his King. The present mayor, Monsieur Genty, had been invited to meet me, and proved an agreeable communicative functionary, with whom, I conceive, his predecessor in office, in the last century, could have had but little in common. The Procès Verbal is attributed to the pen of Sauce, whose designation as Attorney of the Commune would not have

been inconsistent with his tenure of the mayoralty, or chief office of the Corporation; and his trade was sufficiently cared for and conducted by his wary and inflexible better-half, who, it must be admitted, most probably *saved her husband's head*. The arrest of the royal family formed, as a matter of course, one of the leading topics of our dinner conversation: but it would not be easy to recapitulate, in very lucid order, the many subjects discussed in that most agreeable symposium, with reference to which my facetious entertainer reminded me that I must consider myself doing penance, as dining after the fashion of Messieurs les Curés. This, however, was *un persiflage*. All was served *selon les règles*; and though the young assistant minister, already mentioned, seemed a blunderer in concocting a salad, Monsieur le Maire acquitted himself *à merveille*, in rescuing it from his inexperience and mismanagement, and making it almost “a *dinner* of herbs.” He obtained from me a correct notion of our Lord Mayor of London, whom I verily believe the majority of Monsieur Genty's countrymen imagine to be something below the rank of a field-marshal, but quite as military!

The Curé was full of anecdote, and discussed with much humour the peculiarities of French, Russian, and English manners; the relative facilities of learning foreign languages, the progress of Science and Art, the advancement of National Education, and the sound judgment evinced by the reigning Emperor, in every act of sympathy with the declared needs and wishes of the people; especially in respect of the revival and support of ecclesiastical influence now mainly exerted in making the

spread of knowledge auxiliary to better morals and firmer allegiance both to the Church and State. The trashy feuilletons of the newspapers, the novels of Sue, and writers of his class, had compelled many able and right-minded men to supply worthier matter; and the bulk of the reading community had begun, already, to encourage large editions of cheap serials written for the express purpose of giving a healthy tone to the public mind; after the style of "Dickens's Household Words." Large lending Libraries had also been established for the same object; which I remember having noticed ten years since in Paris. Our entertainer's old Burgundy wine was of first-rate excellence, and abundantly supplied; but his fine, and highly cultivated, intellect furnished a feast of reason, endearing, as well as enriching, my every recollection of Varennes. *We met again*, but not there.

CHAPTER XI.

VERDUN—The “Détenus” of 1802-14—An ancient mariner’s reminiscences of the “Lock-up” in the Citadel—Scene of Dumouriez’s campaigns and excellent generalship—Province of Lorraine—Rocks of St. Mihiel—Banks of the Meuse—Flooded and spoiled hay; how disposed of—The kharroub, or St. John’s bean, provender for cattle—Bourg of St. Mihiel—Its two remarkable churches—Beautiful sculpture: the Entombment: Ligier Richer—Indifference and want of energy among the land occupiers in the midst of inundations.

HAVING heard such frequent mention, in years long since bygone, of VERDUN, and of the English families detained there as prisoners between 1802 and 1814, I turned my steps in that direction, and secured a place in the queer, crazy, uncouth-looking vehicle, bespattered with a fortnight’s mud, called ‘the Mail;’ a hooded phaeton-built calèche, holding three passengers, and having a driver’s seat in front. Many kind adieux followed and speeded the parting guest, as my last items of luggage were brought from “Le Grand Cerf,” and deposited in the shaky old carriage; and Jeannette, having first taken thought for the *pot-au-feu*, had, at an early hour,

requested audience for only one word which she hoped, with much twirling of the apron corner, would not offend — “Would I take her portrait?” She was sure I could do anything à merveille in that way; and she had never seen her face on paper! Now Jeannette was not one of “Beauty’s daughters,” nor generally well favoured; and when, upon dashing in a few touches in my Sketch-Book I asked whether the pencil had satisfied her longings after such immortality, she was quite content to forego the opportunity of possessing the faithful delineation now lying in a folio of miscellanies; and wondered, musingly, and, perhaps, doubtfully, whether she had *une mine si peu favorisée!*

The road to Verdun, planted on either side with ash and elm, lay along an ugly tract of country skirting for some time a wide extent of wheat crops grown on undulating valleys, and interspersed occasionally with great breadths of hemp; indeed, towards the middle of the day, when we ascended and descended a succession of hills, not a shrub or a twig was in sight; and nothing but clover, tares, and lucerne were visible on either side, till the eye rested on a range of hills covered with forests, between which and the road stood dense plantations of young timber trees. As these disappeared, the wheat cultivation met the eye in all directions; (but the plant was quite green,) and slopes and plains succeeded alternately, exhibiting judicious and careful tillage, and standing thick with corn, till, at about four o’clock, we gained a full view of the valley of the Meuse; the river winding through the plain in graceful bends till concealed by a bold and lofty acclivity which intercepted further range of view; and, on the summit of

which, at about four miles' distance, stood the conspicuous towers of the principal church of Verdun. On our right was a long valley planted with tens of thousands of poplars and willows; but Verdun is surrounded by a plain, in which corn, and green crops, and rich pastures are interspersed in profitable variety, till just below the eminence of land on which the town stands; and then the willows and poplars, most of the latter being of amazing height, form in long lines around it. The immediate approaches to the town, as seen along our road from the Varennes side, reminding me forcibly of the cold, flat, meadow lands lying around Oxford.

I was agreeably surprised in the general aspect of Verdun. It bears every appearance of an important station; and Vauban's splendid fortifications impart grandeur to the features of its natural position, which towers over the plain, in the quarter of the citadel, from an altitude commanding the entire range of the course of the Meuse, and of the country for an extent of many square miles. The principal church, also, stands more than half way up this acclivity, (called Le Rocher), uplifting high in air its two remarkable towers, which somewhat resemble those of St. Sulpice in Paris. Down below, at the foot, as it were, of these cliffs which are surmounted by Government buildings, the Episcopal palace, and public promenades, are the splendid cavalry barracks, and a large proportion of the houses of the Basse Ville or lower town.

There is a handsome and agreeable appearance in almost all the houses. The Town Hall is a palatial edifice, built

originally by a lady of title, a foreigner, detained here in the eighteenth century as a prisoner of State, and permitted thus to aggrandise her condition of captivity, though not to acquire a fee-simple in the premises which have, for a considerable period, become National property. The squares are spacious, the streets well planned and beautifully clean; and there is an activity and liveliness in the general bearing of the people one sees continually passing to and fro, which, combining with the innumerable uniforms of a large military force constantly garrisoned here, conveys the idea of Verdun being a thriving, busy, mart, and her population of twelve thousand, being citizens of no mean city. It was not an integral part of the French territory before the middle of the sixteenth century. I believe there is very little trade stirring; unless, indeed, the manufacture of the best sugar-plums in France, as they affirm, and of native liqueurs, affords occupation to the hands not employed in the Tanneries; or in business created by the wants of a large garrison, horse and foot.

The fortifications are of immense strength, extending in all directions; and the emerald-green grass turf on every bastion and glacis, is kept cut as close as the pile of velvet; the scarps exhibit, also, some of the most perfect masonry in brick and stone that ever blended beauty and strength. Vauban's ornate style is here pre-eminently displayed in the architectural grandeur and richness of his posterns and main passages; the archway gates of which exhibit elaborate sculpture, and add a grace to the draw-bridge-entries more consonant with the temples of Peace,

than with the strongholds of men of war. Verdun, however, is but a fortress of the fourth class among the three hundred ancient, and thirty-three new, citadels fortified by the greatest engineer France has ever produced ; and from its natural advantages of site might, with a proportionate body of defenders, offer the most effective resistance against attack from the plains ; independently of its protecting masses of stone revetments, redoubts, and moats built up by the ingenious craft of military science.

I was bent, nevertheless, upon penetrating into the lofty citadel ; and, after passing two drawbridges, and proceeding unquestioned through groups of some twenty or thirty idling soldiers, gained audience of a colour-sergeant who assured me that further entry was strictly interdicted, unless on presentation of a written "pass" from the commandant, whom he recommended me to seek in the lower town. I urged the fact of my having travelled upwards of two hundred leagues, and of having still a very long journey before me ; and that as I was not a *militaire*, but an English civilian desirous of seeing the old "Lock-up-House" in the citadel, and then departing, I hoped he would at least allow me to state as much to the Captain of the Guard, who, I conceived, would not see any insuperable objections to my admission. Hereupon I was led towards a range of low buildings, a part of the Officers' quarters, and presently found myself confronted with the Captain of the Guard, to whom I repeated the substance of my appeal made on the drawbridge. He was about sixty years old, with more of the lean and slippered pantaloon in his ap-

pearance than of the *vieux soldat* of the *Grande Armée* ; but he had the good sense to be of my opinion, and sent me forward, at once, with two or three privates, into the very heart of the citadel. Here were the picturesque and beautiful ruins of the Gothic chapel of St. Vannes attached to an ancient convent long since extinct, but the cloisters of which still remain to delight the eye of taste ; a portion, also, of the tower is yet undestroyed ; but the space once occupied by the Religious House and Sanctuary is now covered by a capacious barrack, built thirty years ago, where bugles have superseded bells ; and men of war, in most capacious red inexpressibles ; swear and smoke where the priests sung masses, and the nuns prayed, and the incense burned ; and, altogether, the vestiges of what hath been convey a saddening appearance of desecration.

At no great distance from this, in the centre of a green sward, encompassed by ramparts, breast-works, and embrasures, stands a solitary Round House, built of stone, the walls of which are six feet thick, and contain cells above and below ground. It serves at the present day as a Military prison ; and there were five soldiers confined in it at the period of my visit. It was built at a very remote date for the incarceration, on some political ground of offence, of one of the Dukes of Angoulême ; but has acquired a somewhat equivocal celebrity as the "Lock-up," in which, between the year 1802 and 1814, such of the English *détenus* or prisoners of war (chiefly travellers arrested *en voyage*) as signally misconducted themselves while at large on their *parole*, in the town and within a range of three

miles' distance from it, were sure to be confined; and I learned from Captain N— to whom I presented a letter of introduction from the worthy Curé of Varennes, and who had been detained here, and eventually married a lady of Verdun, that he had “passed a not very agreeable fortnight” in the *cachots* of this

‘stern round tower of other days,’

to which he had been consigned, as he subsequently learned, for the good of his soul and the preservation of his limited worldly substance, at the instance of his commanding officers, when a youngster in the Royal Navy, on their discovering that he had formed acquaintance with some French gamblers; “but the game was all up,” he said, “after *that* !”

His ship had been wrecked off the Saints' Rocks, below L'Orient, in 1804,—and he was sent up with the whole crew to Verdun, and there remained till the first dethronement of Bonaparte: he then went over to England, but soon returned, and married a young lady of Verdun, whose acquaintance he had cultivated very tenderly, and who took him captive, when his messmates went free; and to her he introduced me. She seemed about sixty years of age, not a “sweet enslaver” now; but a lively, intelligent elderly dame, speaking English very respectably,—which is not incompatible, as we all know, with a moderate garnish of perfect French.

Of this small, but formidable, donjon, (it might be about thirty yards in circumference) I managed to take two

sketches, much to my astonishment that any drawing should have been permitted within a fortification. The principal one is here annexed.



The “ancient Mariner” testified to its accuracy, and seemed to recognise every stone of it; though unluckily for him, in his days of “limbo” he was far better acquainted with the interior, than with the outside of his old prison.

By far the most picturesque and characteristic view of Verdun is that obtained from the foot of the bridge across the Meuse, at the extremity opposite to the old castellated gate through which the town is entered on that side.

The two round towers, between which is the Archway, are in the style of our Carisbrook Castle; and the machicolations, loopholes, and battlements above, though much defaced by adaptations of the building to modern purposes, carry the imagination back to the second Crusade, the Guelphs and Gibellines, and the seventh Louis: though,

as a matter of fact, they now serve as the mere adornments of a town jail; as is the case at West Gate, Canterbury.

The general aspect of this grand relic of remote ages is very imposing; and, with a foreground view of the bridge,* and a lateral one of so much of the town as covers the bank of the river, between the bridge and the principal square, forms a *coup-d'œil* which Canaletti or Studio Van Lint in *their* day, or Prout and Bonington in *ours*, would have delighted to illustrate in all the charms of transparent shadow, contrasting lights, and aerial perspective. I sate three hours, sketching, at this point; surrounded by about twenty idlers, chiefly boys and soldiers, who, forasmuch as we were now in the middle of the Dog-days, formed an opportune screen from the sun, though with a woful deficiency of ventilation. The chief amusement of the soldiers, when not intent upon the progress of the pencil, was to cuff and kick the young *gamins de ville*, who, every now and then, thrust themselves between me and "the middle distance."

There have been stirring times and evil days for Verdun in many an age since the memorable treaty in the middle of the ninth century, which confirmed to the sons of the deceased Charlemagne, their shares of the territory conquered by that redoubtable old Emperor of the West. Sixty-three years ago the town was bombarded for fifteen hours, and fell into the hands of the Prussians; but was soon afterwards recovered by the French, to whom this barrier fortress was of no light importance at a period when their frontier was threatened, and a hundred thousand foreign troops were advancing from the Rhine. This was at the period of

* See Frontispiece.

Dumouriez's success, when, by the superiority of his tactics, and unparalleled presence of mind, he preserved the Army of the North, and dispersed the German powers, by whom Verdun, Stenay, and Longwy would have been speedily occupied; and the Eastern provinces become the theatre of harassing and disastrous war.

The Military swarm in the streets from morn till night, and the general appearance of things reminded me of Chatham on a field-operation day. The French officers may well be partial to such quarters; for Verdun is decidedly a handsome and lively town: and the British prisoners who began the present century as involuntary residents in it might have gone further into France, and fared, as the saying is, infinitely worse.

I saw some English names on shop-fronts, suggestive, as seemed, of some of our countrymen having settled here at the termination of the long war, and of their captivity. The "Hotel de l'Europe," where I lodged, and where my bed-room was of spacious drawing-room dimensions, is a very respectable, well-conducted house overlooking the principal square; in the centre of which is a statue erected to the memory of General Chevet, styled in the inscription on the pedestal, "*Enfant de Ville.*"

The pike of the River Meuse are of great renown, as I can testify; but the scenery of its banks is far more worthy of note and recollection, and will amply repay the traveller who, being *en route* from Châlons to Strasburg, should quit the railway at the former town, and make a *détour* by Varennes and Verdun to Commercy, instead of reaching the latter by Vitry and Bar-le-Duc.

My next movement was in the direction of St. Mihiel en Lorraine, on the road to Commercy. The Curé of Varennes made me promise that I would halt here for the express purpose of seeing, what he considered, as a travelled man familiar with the statues of the Vatican and Capitol, to be the finest group of sculpture in its peculiar *genre* in Catholic Christendom. This was high eulogium, indeed; and seemed to outrun probability; but upon inspection I thought it fully borne out.

I travelled from Verdun to within a short distance from St. Mihiel with a very intelligent and entertaining Abbé *en route* to his cure at Metz; but he had never heard of the sculpture here spoken of. My host, however, at Varennes, was a man of research and wide information; an indagator in the paths of knowledge and fine art. Without practical acquaintance, he was familiar with painting and statuary; and every casual reference to the great galleries of Rome or Florence proved him conversant with the merits of almost every *chef d'œuvre* of antiquity treasured up in those matchless repertories.

The majority of the *rural* French clergy, nevertheless, are grossly ignorant, not to say regardless, of such works of excellence, and equally so of architectural science—as the interior of every church in their dioceses indicates; and often take far greater care of a tawdry doll personating the Virgin Mary in painted plaister, spangles and tinsel, than of an altar-piece from the hand of Caracci or Coreggio; and, with an incurable predilection for trumpery, may be said to glory in their shame.

We had a charming ride in an uncouth lumbering old 'Diligence,' along the course of the Meuse. On our right

lay flat breadths of arable and pasture land; the river winding beautifully through the plains, and skirted beyond them by densely wooded heights of ever varying and agreeable outline. To our left were partially cultivated acclivities, exhibiting the prevalence of stone in the whole range of rampart-like hills lying in that direction. The country, however, to the right, where the gentle, silvery stream of the Meuse held its course, bore the aspect of English scenery; of that especially which meets the eye between Maidenhead and Swindon on the Great Western Railway. From the prevalence of heavy rains in the early part of summer, the river had for the last three years flooded these fine pastures, and, in seeking its natural channel, formed the most beautiful bends; an effect which at this time materially enhanced the attractiveness of the landscape. The declivities along the range of hills on the right descend here and there to the river side in narrow breadths of timber growth; and, where cedar and pine abound, these dark plantations form a highly characteristic feature.

The distance between the road and the river varies from one to two miles. Another intervening region of richest pasture lands, between the stream and background of this charming picture, throws into diminutive proportions the white-walled distant villages which stud the green hill-sides like pearls; and when a bright diffusion of sun-light illuminates the parti-coloured slopes, the ripening corn, the pink flowering clover, the golden turnip seed crop, and the dotted range of villages

——— “with rays that sleep there lovingly,”

and the resplendent river

—— “ gathering many a flood, and copious fed
With all the mellowed treasures of the sky,
Winds in progressive majesty along,”

reflecting at intervals the forms of tall and umbrageous trees that seem to have quitted their highland stations to visit its waters—the scenery permits not the eye to withdraw its gaze : it is, in every sense of the word, fascinating ; and though the course of the Marne had proved delightful to contemplate, only a week previously—the valley of the Meuse asserted a glorious pre-eminence, and requited a hundredfold all the delays and *desagrémens* of cross-road *détours* by which I had reached it ; but this tract of country now remains comparatively untravelled :—at Verdun, the hotel-keeper had not seen any of our countrymen for three or four years ; they all fly along, he added, intent upon reaching the Rhine ; and yet the valley of the Meuse would show them some of the sweetest prospects in France. I remarked, hereupon, that the graziers of this part of the province could not participate our pleasure in beholding the islands and lakes formed by the devious river, among their hundreds of acres awaiting the scythe and hay-harvest. Wherever the grass had been cut, and left in swaths, the hay, according to our English notions, was utterly spoiled ; but the horses in France evince none of that fastidiousness noticeable in our sheds and stables, where even an underbred cob may often be seen sniffing at the provender, and immediately pronouncing his candid opinion of its quality by spreading it on the straw under his feet, (as Christians

place a feather-case over a mattress) and thus using it as *bed* instead of *board*. I have seen many of the most valuable breed of "machiners," and "roadsters," in Normandy and elsewhere, devouring with avidity a mass of fibre resembling door-mats picked to pieces; and the cows smiling complacently on the same rubbish, and munching it without groan or grumbling. But what acquiescence, in matters of diet, may not be expected from stock that consent to batten (as was shown in Chap. III.) upon poplar twigs!

The Kharroub bean of Arabia, (*Ceratonia siliqua*), which is in common cultivation throughout the Mediterranean, is now coming into extensive use in France. It was collected all along the coast of Italy [as horse provender for the cavalry at Naples, during the occupation of that city by the Austrians in 1821; and I returned at that time from Messina in a three-hundred-ton vessel laden exclusively with this vegetable. It exactly resembles a thick stunted "scarlet runner" bean; and in taste, when uncooked, reminds one of a dried sprat or capelin fish. Its nourishing properties are not equal to those of oats; but cattle of all kinds can well subsist upon it.* Hence its frequent appearance in the French mangers. A friend of mine has sent to Barcelona for a supply; and I incline to think this Locust pulse will prove as useful and economical in Devonshire as in Lorraine or Provence. Many readers will recognise in this the Locust bean, otherwise called St. John's bean, or "bread;" the Baptist having been supposed to have subsisted on this, in the wilderness, and not

* The swine in the charge of the prodigal son [Luke, c. 15] were fed on these beans; and the "husks" [the *κεράρια* of the New Testament] were the pods containing the pulse. Malta is overrun with this vegetable.

on the locust *insect*. It is a moot point ; but opinion, in general, inclines towards the literal interpretation of the word translated “locusts,”—which the Arabs eat, fresh and dried, to this day.

The native servants, moreover, in Bengal collect the latter in great quantities, and make a delicious curry thereof, quite equal, if not superior, to one compounded of prawns, which is, decidedly, one of the best.

Mais, revenons à notre foin ! When the hay is so execrably noisome, from damp and rottenness, as to be repudiated by horses, bullocks, and cows, and even by asses, (whose tongues and taste—judging by their gluttony when left among thistles—would not repudiate old brooms or clothes-brushes,) the French farmers dispose of it to builders and bricklayers, who use it in mortar instead of cow-hair, as I have frequently noticed in the plaistering of ordinary dwellings ; and what these buyers consider to be too highly priced, the upholsterers, coachbuilders, and warehousemen take off immediately. Hence the tenants of these river-side farms prefer letting the grass stand for hay ; instead of fattening stock upon it, and covering the pasturage with sheep and bullocks ; for the butchers have no interest in prize oxen and the fat of rams. Their customers are liberal buyers of lean beef and mutton ; though, strange to say, they lard the former freely, to supply the absence of fat ; and, while this is the case, the graziers’ pinguifying processes would be only wasteful and ridiculous excess, and a most un-remunerative course of farming. On the other hand, let their hay-crop have lain under water for ten days, and been raked up as a mere *caput mortuum*, it will always realize a certain sum, and,

like a serving-man hard up for a situation, make itself generally and unreservedly useful. If it prove worse than useless in stall or stable, it will meet you, *quand même*, in your bedding, as a slit in the ticking will often demonstrate; so that "clean hay and straw for travellers" may sometimes refer to the Christian man's paillassé and mattress, rather than to his beast's supper and sleeping accommodation; but this spoilt grass finds its way into your carriage, your sofa, chairs, and stools, hassocks, cushions, saddles, and door-mats—to say nothing of the frequent substitution of it for horse-hair, wool, and wadding; some of the sergeants' dress-jackets being indebted, now and then, to a friendly handful, by way of pad; and thus, *malgré* all the damp and damage which led to its original condemnation, its range is far and wide between subalterns and scarecrows, palaces and pig-styes.

After this elucidation, on the scene of ruin, I ceased to feel any painful sympathy with the land-occupiers' predicaments in the middle of the inundating waters. In the flood of June, 1856, it must, nevertheless, have been unenviable indeed; hardly a crop on the Saône, Rhône, or Meuse, having been carried.

When these luxuriant meadows began to disappear, the land sloped gently down from the road to the river-bank in wide shelving breadths of wheat, barley, oats, peas, tares, and potatoes, extending in a parallelogram of about ten thousand acres of prolific soil, lying well in respect of drainage, sun, and air; and admirably cultivated. The gradual rise, corresponding with this fertile tract on the opposite side, formed a vast Vale of Plenty, in which the delighted eye might behold, at one glance, the hills

watered from above, the earth satisfied with the fruit of God's works, grass growing for the cattle, green herb for the service of men, food brought forth out of the earth, wine that maketh glad, and bread to strengthen, the heart of man.* Had the sweet psalmist of Israel sate on the way-side rocks, and marked this region for his theme, he would hardly have depicted it in other language; and his royal son might here, indeed, have exclaimed: "The King himself is served by the field."

It was but nine o'clock in the morning when we reached the "Falaises" of St. Milhiel; the peculiar rocks on the left side of the road overlooking the river, which, at this point, is not above three furlongs distant. These enormous masses of stone, closely resembling granite, rise out of rich loam slightly blended with dark sand, in grotesque and picturesque forms, which, wherever they are isolated, (and this is the position of the majority,) assume the appearance of gibbous cylinders from twenty to sixty feet high, and a hundred and fifty feet in circumference. There are upwards of twenty of these wondrous stony protuberances rising abruptly from the patches of cultivated soil at their base, like round towers of the middle ages, greyish white in colour, and cleft here and there by the action of water, where the rain has percolated the mass from its summit, but wholly destitute of moss, or lichens, or any the slightest appearance of vegetation.

The most remarkable of all are the seven last preceding the entrance into the town. An ascent by a very steep flight of steps, hewn chiefly out of the natural rock, leads

* Psalm civ.

up to the last of these from the road side ; and the rock has been excavated at the summit of the steps, so as to exhibit a little recess about ten or eleven feet wide, six deep, and nine in height, in which, on a Sarcophagus, in the style of the tomb of the Scipios, at Rome, is laid a life-size stone effigy of our Lord, surmounted by an inscription, denoting it to be the Mont Calvaire of St. Mihiel, or a spot consecrated to the memory of the sepulture of Christ. A path leads up behind this to the very apex of the mighty rock, where stands a crucifix in a small iron-railed enclosure. From this elevated spot a charming prospect is enjoyed of the country, right and left, in which the windings of the Meuse, and the little lakes and islands formed by its deviating waters, and the rich pastures, and various white and green crops, appear mapped out, as in a brilliantly coloured bird's-eye view of thirty miles' area, till the seemingly interminable tract is lost in a dim horizon which melts into atmosphere and mingles, as it were, with the sky.

I succeeded in making two drawings here ; but they should be presented to the eye on a scale far exceeding the limits of this page ;—and the pen must, therefore, forego the good services of the hand-maid pencil, and pass on to the mention of the group of statuary, (the sole object of my visit to this lone, unfrequented spot) in the Bourg church ; a plain, unpretending edifice of less than half the dimensions of the principal church of St. Michael. The handbook I travelled with spoke of “a curious church containing a small bas-relief of the Entombment by Ligier Richer.” Some one must have misinformed the editor on this point. The group of thirteen figures, life size, stands

in a shallow artificial cave or recess, wrought in the thickness of the wall, about eighteen feet long, nine feet high, and six deep from front to back, (intended to represent the new tomb hewn out of the solid rock,) and exhibits the body of our Lord supported at the head and shoulders by a turbaned personage, in the costume of the East, evidently meant for Joseph of Arimathæa; the legs and feet resting on the projected knee of a similarly turbaned figure in the costume of a ruler of the Jews; the "master of Israel," who "came to Jesus by night." A female figure in most elaborately adorned attire, representing Mary Magdalene, (whom the foreign artists invariably depict thus extravagantly dressed,) is on her knees, bearing a napkin on her right wrist, and seems to be approaching the feet to kiss them. A small vase stands just under the napkin. Immediately behind her is an angel standing with head inclined towards the dead body, as if in adoration; and holding the large nails which are supposed to have been recently drawn out of the pierced hands and feet. Close on the left of the celestial visitant is a cross erect; and behind, or, rather, at the extremity of the cave, towards the front, is a female, probably intended for Mary, wife of Cleopas, bending over a tank into which she appears to be emptying a vessel, supposed to have contained water employed to wash the holy form, and the wounds wherewith it had been marred. Immediately behind Nicodemus, who is bending on his right knee, while supporting the legs of the body on his left, is seen the sorrowing Mother of Christ, whose left arm rests on the outstretched arm of John. The beloved disciple stands beside her, sustaining her on the left with his right arm. A female figure immediately

behind the Cross, which the Romanists would probably recognize to be Saint Veronica,* is seen assisting St. John by supporting the Virgin Mary on the right side. Behind Joseph of Arimathæa are seen two half naked figures, representing the soldiers who cast lots for the seamless coat, throwing down dice upon a military *drum-head* ! Prominent in front of them is a female figure, (Mary, perhaps, the mother of James and John,) holding the crown of thorns with both hands, and gazing on it in an agony of sorrow ; and behind her is a seated figure, the Roman Centurion, in deep and mournful meditation ; and this completes the group.

An iron railing is thrown out from the wall, surrounding an oblong pit, three feet below the surface of the pavement, (to the full extent of the length of the Sepulchre), into which, upon unlocking the railing gate, the sexton invites the spectator to descend ; but no advantage is attained hereby, as the general fine effect is lost by such close approximation and all but actual contact. I saw it and sketched it, at the distance of about three yards. The statues must have been each wrought apart, and placed *in situ* as they left the atelier of the sculptor, till the entire group stood in the order of arrangement observed in his preliminary plaister model. They appeared to be clear of

* St. Veronica is almost invariably introduced by the foreign artists into every representation of the Crucifixion and Entombment. She is regarded as one of the devout women who followed our Lord out of Galilee, and enjoys the repute of having wiped His perspiring forehead as He was bearing His cross to Calvary, and of having found permanently imprinted on the handkerchief (or veil, or napkin), the entire portraiture of his features !

all dust, and are probably placed under the immediate charge of the Sacristan with a view to, at least, weekly cleansing from any such impurity ; and well do they deserve such attention and watchfulness, for, as works of High Art, they are invaluable.

I have seen nothing in Europe comparable with this production. The figures on the same subject in the Apse of St. Roch in Paris, where a representation of the Sepulchre in the rock is approached by passages imitating clefts in a cavern, are extraordinarily beautiful ; and forty years' acquaintance with them has not diminished the admiration with which I first beheld them. They are startling and impressive ; but the effect is diffused, the figures being in groups of twos and threes, more akin to a solemn procession towards the tomb.

Now, in the cave at St. Mihiel Bourg Church all stand within a space of six yards by two, and appear the more real and truthful in consequence of such naturally chosen positions. The expression of feeling left in the features of each personage is so accurately portrayed as to affect the beholder with a sense of it at a single glance. Each seems to be intently and painfully occupied in the fulfilment of an allotted office ; to be hastening the burial, and acting as in the presence of a ministering angel. Every lip is closed. No one personage is represented addressing another. The misery depicted in the Virgin's countenance is most touching. The " sword " has indeed pierced that " soul." The gently proffered aid of St. John, who seems to be deeply impressed with the sense of the tender charge so recently laid upon him by his Redeemer, from the Cross, is admirably indicated by the manner and attitude in which he

seems to be rather preparing to arrest the fall of the all but fainting Mother, than to uphold her by any compressing touch. Mary Magdalen's eyes appear swelled as with much weeping, and her fingers all but touch the feet of that body which was not "to see corruption." The fixed and tearful gaze of the other Mary, who holds out the crown of thorns, at arms' length, in a downward direction, as though pondering on the cruelty that could devise and employ such an instrument of torture—and on the immaculate innocence of the sufferer—is eminently beautiful.

The emanation of true genius is discerned in the isolation of Nicodemus and Joseph, surrounded by those who were the intimates, so to speak, of the divine Son of Mary, yet seeming to act without communication or interruption. Joseph of Arimathæa appears to be wrapt in thought on the contingency of his affording to that Holy One the rites of sepulture; as if beholding, in that moment, the fulfilment of the prophecy that though His enemies might appoint for their victim a grave in common with the wicked, (even with the impenitent malefactor that hung by His Cross,) the crucified Lord should be with a rich man in his death.* There is a quiet self-possession in this personage which bespeaks deep thought and overpowering convictions, associated with calm delight in being enabled to see this, his own, new tomb in which never man had been laid, thus consecrate and sanctified.

Nicodemus gazes into air, as if incapable of speech. With compressed lips, he seems to perpend what might result if, indeed, all that he had heard in emphatic declaration, or implied in no ambiguous prediction, at that

* Isaiah, ch. LIII. v. 9.

interview by night, "for fear of the Jews," (which Joseph, at his side, had also evinced) should come to pass; even as this *lifting up* to the Cross of suffering had been realized.

The Centurion, who had, only a few hours before, proclaimed "this Man" to be truly the Son of God, is skilfully placed so as not to appear in immediate association with any of the individuals above mentioned. He sits as if awe struck and confounded. Having witnessed that good confession at the foot of the Cross, he seems to have shrunk into himself, and "Old things are passed away" in that man.

All this Scriptural characteristicness is predicable of the several statues here described; and if to this wonderful fidelity of representation be superadded the merit of exquisite handling in all the detail, and of a harmony which would admit of no improvement in the disposition of the whole, though one regrets the introduction of the modern *drum*, the claim of this obscure and comparatively unknown masterpiece of genius to the homage of the world's *cognoscenti*, and of every sincere lover of Taste and Truthfulness in combination, cannot but be fully acknowledged.

The ancient conservators of the sacred edifice and its precious deposit seem to have entertained this opinion, and accordingly affixed two inscriptions above it; one in Latin, and the other in French:—

Illud quisquis ades Christi mirare sepulchrum
Sanctius, at nullum pulchrius, orbis habet.

Passant de Jésus Christ admire ce tombeau—
Il en fut un plus saint, mais jamais de plus beau.

Which we may translate thus :

Stranger, whoe'er thou art that passest by,
The sepulchre behold of Christ our Lord !
The world may boast a holier,* but the eye
A tomb more rich in beauty ne'er explor'd.

✱ The sacristan knew nothing beyond the name of the sculptor ; and there is no date visible, so far as a very close inspection enabled me to judge. However, after entering two or three of the best looking shops in the vicinity of the church, I succeeded in obtaining information of the residence of an artist who was likely to be well acquainted with the subject, as he had been seen, some time since, busily occupied in front of the statues ; and the enclosing iron rails had been removed expressly for his accommodation. This was welcome intelligence ; for I hoped to find some tolerably good lithographic drawing in his portfolio which would enable me to carry home a more highly finished illustration than my own just made. After a troublesome search I discovered the place of his abode, and, luckily, the man himself.

He stated himself to be chiefly occupied in giving lessons, and in lithography : that he had about a year ago endeavoured to take a Daguerreotype of the group, and succeeded on a small scale ; with exception of the two figures at the drum which, being so far back, were hardly perceptible in the proof when taken off. On view of it, (it

* This may refer to the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem.

was on metal), I could with difficulty trace the lineaments of the several figures, and saw at once it was a complete failure: as, indeed, he himself considered it; owing, as he said, and reasonably enough, to the want of light in the South aisle. Had these thirteen statues stood in the North aisle there would have been ample light (as I had observed when in the Church), from three large windows in the choir.

He set too high a price upon the slip of metal he showed me; for I felt no inclination to fill up any little defects in my own sketch at the cost of five and twenty francs; but though I relinquished the purchase of his faulty specimen, I was indebted to Monsieur Malgras, on this occasion, for the information, unattainable elsewhere, that Ligier Richer, the sculptor, lived in the sixteenth century, and died towards its close: that he wrought this admirable work expressly for the Bourg Church of St. Mihiel, his native town, in the stone of a quarry not far distant, and long since closed up.

He said the churchwardens had very obligingly caused the iron railing to be taken down on the occasion of his attempting to make the copy in question; as otherwise it would have been impossible to effect even what he had done: that it was to be regretted so fine a work should lie completely hidden from the world, worthy as it was of occupying a position of high eminence in any part of Europe; that he was not aware of any native or foreign artist having accurately copied it, and he believed there was no print of any kind, nor ever had been any executed, which I could succeed in procuring.

I should, nevertheless, incline strongly to believe that

the indefatigable and highly gifted Germans have not suffered three centuries to elapse without the annexation of "The Entombment" of St. Mihiel to their Galleries of Art.

The Church of St. Michael is also enriched with a group of two beautiful statues carved in walnut-wood by the same master. They are erected on the summit of the high-altar, and represent St. John preventing the swooning Mother of Christ from falling to the ground. They appear to be stone statues; but the wood is painted so as to resemble stone.

The Organ in this church is on an immense scale; being thirty-two feet high and thirty wide, with a hundred pipes visible in front. The gigantic Caryatides below it are of the highest order of excellence in wood-carving. The church itself is of noble dimensions, but the architecture is of a depraved style of Composite; and the ten columns of the nave, however massive, (they are five feet in diameter), arrest the attention rather by display of *quantity* than of quality.

A dozen young lads were practising psalms with the *maître-de-chapelle*, and made an incredible noise; but, very unlike the generality of their order, they sang in perfect tune.

There is a third church; (somewhat *de trop* in this little bourg, as it is called, the population of which exceeds not six thousand :) but it exhibited nothing remarkable. There is, also, a College and a Hospital, both maintained in full efficiency; but the Corn-market is, I believe, the only source of active business at St. Mihiel, the advancement of which is chiefly owing to its proximity to Com-

mercy and the great Strasburg line from which it is about twelve miles distant.

Finding a Diligence starting for Commercy at a quarter to five o'clock in the afternoon, I engaged my favourite corner in the coupé, with a view to reaching Vaucouleurs before night.

In about twenty minutes' time after our departure, a goodly prospect opened before us of an immense plain crossed (and at this time extensively overflowed) by the Meuse. We ascended an eminence on which the road doubled, affording a splendid view as it approached and descended to the bridge thirty feet wide, and resting on eleven arches, which formed so picturesque a feature in the view from the Calvaire Rock above mentioned. At about the distance of three miles from this point, the right side of the road ran along a lofty bank; but to the left lay a vast expanse of, at least, four square miles of water, the yet unchecked inundating flood of the river, which here spread itself in all directions, (as the Danube often does in autumn, over the flat country about Vienna) and presented all the appearances of a large lake; to the great embellishment of the scenery, certainly; but to the annihilation of the hay which, strange as it may appear, considering it was the twentieth day of July, had not been carried.

After passing through a handsome village as long as Gravesend, we crossed the Strasburg railway at the station of Lerouville, and, pursuing our journey, came in the course of twenty minutes upon another scene of inundation, in the midst of which appeared little islands, (the more elevated portions of the meadows lying under water,)

and, here and there, floating swaths of saturated and ruined hay.

I envied not the indifference and acquiescent *sang-froid* of land-occupiers of that district. A deputation from our "Undertakers" in the Lincolnshire Deepings would soon disabuse the grazing farmers on the banks of the Meuse of their opinion that this evil admits of no remedy.

The river lay but forty yards distant, on the left, from our carriage wheels, at the foot of the slope on which we were now proceeding ; and the town on our right which we were on the point of entering was Commercy.

CHAPTER XII.

Commercy : Vaucouleurs : Approach to the home and history of Jeanne d'Arc—Governor Robert de Baudricourt—Durant Laxart, Jeanne's uncle, a native of Petit Burey, near Vaucouleurs — “ *Une petite voiture* ”—Bad management of Crown woods—Immense breadths of barley ; grown for flour—Singular appearance of the poppy compartments in line : the surprising height of the plant, and its military uniform feature—Corn growth and grazing on a vast scale—Department of the Vosges — Domremi : birth-place of Jeanne d'Arc — Preservation of the cottage in which she was born, through successive generations and governments, to the present day—The Bois Chénus : the woods in which she wandered—Her statues and escutcheons : the paternal hearth—Reminiscences — Her alleged posterity—Contented ignorance of the Religieuse, keeper of the *Livre des Voyageurs*, on the spot—Reflections on the poor maiden's history.

COMMERCEY is situated at a point nearly half-way between Bar-le-duc and Nancy ; and, like all little towns on a trunk-line, has begun to enlarge its borders, and to throw out many new buildings in all directions. The Strasburg Railway has infused life into its dulness ; and speculative transactions in corn have superseded the precarious trade in which its four or five thousand inhabitants, depending

hitherto on their central situation between the Luxemburg frontier and Epinal, Chaumont, Chalons, and Nancy, held this cross-road position as a *Bureau de Roulage*, or Carrier Station, at which all agencies and factorships found employment in distributing the produce of the fertile departments by which it is surrounded. I noticed some handsome buildings and two churches; but, in the absence of any object of peculiar interest, decided on hastening towards Vaucouleurs, eleven miles distant.

Vaucouleurs was the place of which, in the early part of the fifteenth century, Robert de Baudricourt, a zealous adherent of Charles VII., was governor, at the first outburst of Jeanne d'Arc's enthusiasm, under the influence of which she prevailed on her uncle Durant Laxart, a simple villager living about half-way between Domremy and Vaucouleurs, to seek out the governor, and make known to him the extent of her inspiration, and her conviction that she could deliver her king and country from the English.

She went from Domremy, her birth-place, to Petit Burey, Laxart's residence, for this special purpose; and he set out for Vaucouleurs, whence he returned with Baudricourt's advice that he should box his niece's ears and send her home. How she eventually succeeded, by repeated appeals and the intercession of zealous advocates on her behalf, in gaining the governor's reluctant consent for her departure to Chinon,* is matter of familiar history; and my mention of it, in this passage, is merely to grace with such reminiscences this first mention of a place so little known to

* Between Tours and Saumur, where Charles VII. was; 400 miles from Vaucouleurs.

general readers as Vaucouleurs. To reach this point, which was just half-way towards Domremy, I hired what the Commercy cow-keeper's wife, who lent it me, called "*une petite voiture*," but which was, in fact, a spring-cart capable of carrying a family of eight;—fitted with a bench and a leather hood, half-way; and a large leather apron before and behind. As there was nothing else to be procured except an old berline or family coach requiring three horses, which it would have been as impracticable to find as the Three Graces, I set off in this caravan; looking much as if I were conveying twenty bushels of fruit for the next day's market, with a commission of sale of all the ripe apples and pears of the town. I believe it was a vehicle used for the most part to fetch home calves and hay; but after two splicings of the shaft, at the end of the first two miles, and five or six little repairs with pack thread, and half-hourly adjustments of the reins, girths, and buckles, it carried me safely enough.

The country beyond Commercy becomes destitute of interest as the road recedes from the Meuse. At about an hour before sunset we drove through an apparently uninhabited village called (as I thought, not inappropriately) Void; and hereabouts the Meuse flows in a confined stream like a canal. The road traversed long steep hills on a chalky causeway skirted by very poor stony land; and long before dusk the river disappeared, and our course led into a tract of dense woods, between which and the road lay wide breadths of heath and numerous cavities, resembling exhausted gravel pits. This irregular surface, however, was soon succeeded by a splendid extent of the smoothest grass turf, a hundred feet wide on either side of the road,

beyond which *tapis vert* stood the thick dark forest of Vaucouleurs. These are now Government property; but no timber could attain to valuable size while suffered to grow in such dense unventilated masses as here constitute an almost impenetrable belt of stems and underwood; two thirds of which ought at once to be cleared off, if the State Commissioners of Woods and Forests look for anything beyond "top and lop."

My waggon and well shaken self entered Vaucouleurs at twenty minutes past eight. The only procurable accommodation was a dirty, ill-conditioned public-house of most forbidding aspect, where, but for powers of digestion which ostriches, even, might envy, I must have been killed by the unwholesome entertainment in the shape of supper. Nothing could be much worse than the state of things *below*; but, as is so frequently the case in France, everything (except the tart-dish officiating as a washing-basin) was most comfortable and *comme il faut*, above in a bed-room nearly twenty feet square and eleven high; the bedstead hung with draperies of peculiar elegance, and unexceptionable in all its outfit. The French *en voyage* lay great stress upon the merits or defects of the sleeping apartments; though they accommodate their palates, if need be, to the most meagre and pernicious victuals at supper. Now, in our country, the dinner-room is often far more creditable to the host than his dormitory; and though to *feed* well be an ingredient of travellers' comforts, to *sleep* well is a necessity; and, so far, our neighbours, always less troubled with dyspepsia than ourselves, are not altogether in error.

However, there is a pleasurable feeling, in my opinion, in quitting bad quarters, more intense while it lasts, than

the regret experienced in relinquishing the superiorly good. *It is a deliverance from evil*, and ought to be duly appreciated. Full, therefore, of the hope of "better luck next time," and of the expectation of reaching the paternal hearth of Jeanne d'Arc before breakfast, I left Vaucouleurs and its vile larder before seven o'clock the next morning, in another truly primitive vehicle, "disjoint and out of frame," which the credulous job-master assured me would hold together as far as Lyons (!) if I wanted it ; but Falstaff's grounds of refusal to march through Coventry with his raw levies were squeamishness itself compared with those of my determination not to enter Burgundy in such a buck-basket on wheels as that in which I left the borders of Lorraine.

For the first few miles of jolting and jeopardy, the river remained in sight to the left, through a tract of country consisting for the most part of grass-land and wood plantations. The hay, such as it is, (and I have sufficiently described the conditions of its existence) must be abundant in these districts ; for the stacks are numerous and of very unusual dimensions. I saw one nearly eighty feet long and twenty in height. To the right were extensive thickets of fir, birch, and alders, cultivated expressly for fuel ; the most profitable growth in the country, if the owners can afford to let the trees stand ten years : but this is seldom the case ; and directly the growing wood is convertible into charcoal, the adze and bill-hook are in requisition ; but the produce of sale is about one-eighth only of what might have been realized had the tree been allowed to remain untouched for five years longer, when every hundred-weight of cord-wood would fetch one shilling and eightpence. The railways begin to convey coal into several parts of France, hitherto

debarred the use of that fuel; but wood is ever in great demand, and seems to be cultivated quite to the full extent it used to be before the mine owners so extensively enlarged their business.

After passing through a poverty-struck little village in which the causeway was cut into trenches for the carrying off of the general sewerage into a wide central channel of fluent impurities, in which my unimaginable travelling chariot gave me two such shocks as a man might expect to receive if shut up in the wing of a wardrobe, and thrown out of a first floor window,* I found myself entering a flat country, which reminded me of Marshland, in Norfolk. Here the vine re-appeared, growing in that shingly soil which seems in France, as in Germany, so congenial to the plant. The flats exhibited wheat, barley, hemp, potatoes, and poppy; the latter in full-bloom and attaining a surprising height. The effect of the lilac flowers in this peculiar crop was exceedingly beautiful. It is cultivated equally for laudanum and for oil. The barley, I observed, often occupied two hundred acres in one breadth; an extent of growth having no reference whatever to malt, but to bread; the flour of this grain being hereabout adopted in lieu of wheat meal.

Throughout all this country, the roads are kept in the most admirable condition; each canton or parish supplying its set of road-menders, (hence the term "Cantonnier" for a road labourer) and delivering thousands of loads of stone between September and June, for the maintenance of the highway. This provision is, in fact, indispensable in a country of so undulating a surface, as with few

* Or "shooting" the Niagara fall in Barnum's proposed hollow globe

exceptions distinguishes the French soil. Its • North-Eastern provinces are ribbed with high hills : the absence of such acclivities being a rare occurrence. I suppose that between Meaux and the frontier of the Vosges there is not an interval of three miles in which the background of the landscape beheld from the high-road presents not a range of cultivated heights, and “a heap of corn in the earth, high upon the hills.”—(Psalm 72nd.) Hence the number of deepening valleys, slopes, ravines, and dells, panoramic effects and pictures of characteristic features that beautify the fairest provinces of France.

At the end of an hour and a half's ride, after leaving Vaucouleurs, we came upon a magnificent prospect of the plains, covered with green wheat and barley, at the skirts of which uprose the Vosges mountains ; the Meuse still flowing in a contracted stream through millions of poplars and willows ; and here again, on either side of the road, re-appeared the vineyards of North-Eastern France. Interspersed, however, among the grain crops were strips of soil about a hundred and fifty yards in length, but only eight feet wide, covered with poppies. The plant was here rising to a height of five feet. Crested with their bright red and lilac flowers, these rows of green stems, sometimes in parallel, sometimes at right angles, resembled regiments in light green uniforms, drawn up in line ; and presenting an appearance which, if all the husbandmen had been old soldiers intent upon producing optical illusions, (at which Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim would have shed tears,) could not have approached reality more closely.

Agriculture hereabouts is on a large scale. I saw

within less than a quarter of an hour upwards of two thousand acres of barley ; and the enclosures of pasture were partitioned by strong oaken posts into square compartments, (permanent fixtures,) not unlike the bullock-pens of Smithfield, but seven times larger, and capable, unitedly, of taking in five hundred thousand head of cattle.

The hay, is sent off, pressed, in vast quantities, up the Meuse ; supplying the cavalry dépôts at Verdun and Metz with abundant provender. The cattle are more widely distributed ; but the transactions in corn of all kinds, and in stock, are here conducted on a footing only equalled by the marts of the Chartrain and La Beauce ; the ugliest, I can affirm, but the most prolific, grain-producing territory in the empire. The way-side public-houses exhibit notice-boards announcing the number of horses they can find stalls for ; some thirty, some fifty, and upwards. But it is to be remembered that this part of Lorraine comprised the range of duties devolving on a mighty Commissariat ; being, also, the scene of long and important military operations, involving the movements and counter-movements of myriads of men, especially cavalry ; and little more than forty years have elapsed since Prince Schwartzenberg was in this immediate neighbourhood, with four divisions of the Austrian army of a hundred and fifty thousand men, advancing upon Langres : the very town I was now so shortly to pass through *en route* to Dijon. The farmers and inn-keepers are always, more or less, prepared to facilitate the passage and provisioning of troops ; as, in our country, we see way-side intimations of "cattle taken into bait."

At twenty minutes to nine, after a brief halt at the hostelry of an "Ancien Aubergiste," Marchand de Foin, (Écuries pour soixante chevaux), we entered the department of the Vosges; and not long afterwards left to our right the road to Bar-le-duc, where, some thirty-seven years ago, I met Marshal Oudinot, (Duke of Reggio),—the most honourable of all the old chieftains of the *Grande Armée*—who was born here, and, in the evening of his life, resided in a country seat in the neighbourhood to which my fellow traveller was proceeding.

At this point, the Valley of the Meuse is covered with produce of every conceivable variety. The plain resembles a vast estate farmed entirely by market-gardeners. The declivities from the road-side were exclusively reserved for vine growth; but the hedge-timber, that great provision of fuel, consisted here of poplar trees a hundred feet high each; selected for this situation simply because they throw out perpendicular branches only, and inflict no injury on the crops at their base by shadow or drip. After having cleared a long avenue of these Anakims of the vegetable kingdom, we drove through the little hamlet of Greux, and at nine o'clock, entered Domremy,* where "still the eloquent air breathes, burns with" Jeanne d'Arc.

There are but two conspicuous objects in this little village:—The church, occupying the site of the one in which the poor maiden worshipped; and the Institution for young girls of Domremy and Greux, consisting of two

* Pronounced "Domrie."

superiorly built mansions, resembling, each, a respectable boarding-school. These stand at about a hundred yards' distance from the church, and are detached from each other by a low iron railing of about seventy feet in length, having a scroll-work gate in the middle, which leads into a very neat and pretty little enclosure, planted with firs, arbutus and similar shrubs, and flowers of various kinds; and intersected by paths, one of which leads to the mansion on the left, on the ground floor of which the school business is chiefly conducted; one to the mansion on the right, the parlour of which is a *Salon de Réception* for visitors; and one direct from the gate to a cottage, about twelve yards distant from it, of plainest structure, and shaded by a small tree or two; rather more fully than a stranger eager to see every portion of the dwelling's front would desire. Montaigne, while upon his travels, in 1571, found this front,—which contains hardly more than twenty square superficial yards,—bedaubed with tawdry paintings, (after the fashion of the Ritter Haus, still extant at Schaffhausen,) in which the principal events of Jeanne's brief but eventful career were more grotesquely than artistically commemorated. The surface is once again mere rough plaister-work, “simplex munditiis;” for the little niche above the door, and the sculptured blazon over its lintel, though not contemporary with Jeanne's residence on the premises, seem not out of place, but to have grown, as it were, out of the lone and forsaken tenement; as sprouts are seen to shoot from the felled, but not yet sapless, tree. I here subjoin my drawing, which the publisher *en chef* at Orleans desired with no light solicitude to make his own;

Domremy and its "Palladium," as he called it, being yet, he assured me, un-illustrated.



The two square edifices within the enclosure above mentioned, between which, at about six and thirty feet distance from the gate placed in the centre of the railing, the Cottage stands, were erected in a plain unadorned style, in the present century, by a decree of the Council General of the Department of Vosges, to mark their veneration of the maiden's memory in endowing a seminary to be conducted by a sisterhood of Religieuses, for the benefit of Domremy and Greux. The children of the former village attend as day scholars; the majority of those from Greux are boarders. I saw them in school, and thought of poor Jeanne who could neither read nor write, and who at the neighbouring town of Neufchâteau, which I reached four

hours afterwards, could only repay the cost of her maintenance, and that of her family, (when lodged at the inn, during the quarrels of the Burgundians and Armagnacs at Domremy,) by doing house-work, with her brothers, as a servant.

Having completed this sketch of the outside, I entered the cottage with the purpose of bringing away some recollections of the interior. It is now uninhabited; but the upper room and lower parts are, in all probability, used by the Sisters as repositories for potatoes, fruit and fuel; and the only apartment which has never undergone change is the ground-floor sitting-room, the stone floor of which, and the fire-place, walls, window and ceiling, are declared to have remained without alteration for upwards of four centuries; though the Commissioners from the Council General of the Department found three horses littered in it so lately as the year 1817. The whole of the premises, however, being subsequently redeemed from any such unworthy appropriations, and the cottage, especially, placed in thorough repair,—in which it has ever since remained under the charge of the Religieuses,—their guardian hands, at length, protect the poor maiden's birth-place, and guide the pilgrim, arriving from a distant home, to a contemplation of one which, however homely, is held for ever sacred, as in times past, to her name and memory.

In the wall facing the window of the basement interior, (or sitting-room above mentioned), is inserted a tablet bearing an eulogistic inscription expressive of the sense of Jeanne d'Arc's patriotic virtues and devoted heroism; but I did not copy it, because it constituted no part of the

room as it existed in the fifteenth century. For the same reason I omitted the pedestal which stands in the centre of the stone paved floor, surmounted by an elegant little statuette, in bronze, about thirty inches in height, representing the Maid of Orleans in "that fair and warlike form"



which the genius of the late Louis Philippe's daughter has rendered so familiar to the world. The King presented this miniature copy as an appropriate decoration to the room; but it is decidedly *de trop*, and interferes harshly with the first feeling awakened by entrance into the very chamber at whose hearth the poor girl, having tethered their cows, used to recount to her father and mother the words she had heard uttered by the "Voices" of Michael the archangel, St. Catherine, and St. Margaret, whose forms, she affirmed, had appeared to her in visions, as she sate in the woods called "Bois Chenus;"* for these were

* Hoary forests.

her favourite haunts, into which, at little more than a stone's cast from the parental home, she used to roam from the sunny slope at the foot of which it stood—

“ To twilight groves and visionary vales ;
To weeping grottoes,—and prophetic glooms ;
Where angel-forms, athwart the solemn dusk,
Tremendous sweep, or seem to sweep along ;
And voices more than human, through the void
Deep sounding, seize th' enthusiastic ear.”*

but these dreams in their issue cost her, as is well known, her life.

The statue, here mentioned, would have gratified the eye in any part of the enclosure, but where it actually stands, and would not have obtruded on the *genius loci* ; though some travellers' minds it may be urged, require an active stimulus. What, however, would be more intolerable than a *fancy* bust of Cheops in the centre of the principal chamber of the Great Pyramid of Egypt !

There is a little stone niche of beautiful design and execution, above the doorway, nearly half way up the front of the cottage, in which is a mutilated stone statue of Jeanne ; in armour, but bare-headed,—and with her long hair falling over her ears to the back of the neck. The left hand and almost all the right arm are wanting. She kneels upon a cushion ; and most probably the two hands met, when the figure was perfect, as if clasped in prayer. It is considered to be a work of the sixteenth century ; but as to any likeness of the heroine, it possesses little or no

* Thompson.

interest, for there are not two portraits or busts in all France that agree in features. Artists were scarce in her day : Raffaele was not born till upwards of half a century after her death : but had she been surrounded by Academicians, Jeanne must have been far too actively engaged in politics, sieges, and heady fights to find time for sittings to sculptors or painters, carvers or limners of any class or degree.

Immediately over the door is a pointed Gothic heading in yellowish stone, enclosing as in a frame the scutcheons borne by her family (whom, both on the male and female side, the heartless Charles VII ennobled, after suffering her to perish without protest or interposition on his part,) and which

“ well ratified by law and heraldry ”

Louis XI would seem more particularly to have confirmed with, possibly, some superadded marks of favour ; as his, and not Charles's, name appears in the inscription here given. In the uppermost compartment is a wheat-sheaf, on either side of which is seen a large bunch of grapes : the sheaf is, also, surmounted by three vine leaves. Below this are the words, in old French letter, “ Vive Labeur ; ” (referring to the employment of the peasantry in corn-fields and vineyards,) and, below this motto, the date 1481 ; also in similar ancient characters.

Under this is the shield of France ;—three *fleurs-de-lis* proper :—and, under this, the words “ Vive le roy Louis.”

On either side of this is a similarly sized shield exhibiting, to the spectator's left, three spearheads inverted, and

a star between them ; to the right, a sword, point upward and surmounted by a coronet adorned with, seemingly, four strawberry leaves ; and having on either side a *fleur de lis*.

The *lis* (lily) was assumed, after poor Jeanne's death, by her brothers in lieu of the family name of 'D'Arc : ' in bad taste, according to my notions. Her father's name was Jacques d'Arc ; her mother, Isabeau d'Arc, was a daughter of a family of the name of Romée. Her only sister died in childhood ; but she left three brothers. They were mere peasants of Domremy.

The lineage of this family, so unprecedentedly ennobled, (and while France shall continue to be France, immortalized) was said to have been extinct about the middle of the last century, at the demise of Coulombe de Lis, the Prior of Courtras ; but there are still two families of that name :—one at Nancy and another at Strasburg, who affirm their direct descent from the brothers. There is a family of ancient lineage in this country bearing the name of Lys, one member of which I remember, forty years since, at Oxford, and at Lymington and who may possibly be still making full proof of his ministry (I say not of his French ancestry !) at Stoke Charity, near Petersfield.

As for any communications bearing on the subject of Jeanne's haunts in the woods, or of the credit now attached to her asseverations, or of the influence of her name and history on the minds of the villagers of the present day, or of any privileges still enjoyed by them as natives of Domremy,* the fat nun who acted as Cicerone, ignorant

* By royal grants, dated 1429 and 1459, Domremy was declared free from all taxes. This immunity ceased in 1761.

of and indifferent to such particulars, (as the majority of her class and degree invariably prove,) could make none. Her chief object seemed to be the enrolment of my name in a bulky tome kept for that purpose in the Salon de Réception, on the ground-floor of the building to the right of the gate of entry. I turned over thirty long pages in search of a British name, but found one only, that of a Mr. Lewis, (of Oxford, if I remember correctly,) who had written two or three lines to say he had come from a great distance to this remote spot that he might ascertain what really did remain as vestiges of the Maid of Orleans' 'whereabouts;' and, I think, he expressed himself to the full as well satisfied as, to the holy sister's great contentment, I did. I question, however, whether as she stood twirling her huge bunch of keys and châtelcine, her rosary and crucifix, she clearly understood whether I meant a bird, beast, fish, or angel by the word "Phoenix," when I said I regarded Jeanne d'Arc as the Phoenix of French Heroism who had soared to mundane immortality out of her own ashes. It was *à la Française*, but evidently too mythic. "*Omne ignotum pro mirifico.*"* I dare say she thought me wondrously poetical—perhaps mad—on the subject!

Poor Joan! — I had now traced her way in France. Full of the reminiscences of her career, I had visited the place of her birth, and the scenes also of her brightest exploits as a heroine and devotee intent on the deliverance of her countrymen: had stood within that choir and

* The "unheard of" is often regarded as the "marvellous."

(LATIN PROVERB.)

before that altar where, banner in hand, she took her station, in the pride of place, at the side of Charles VII. amidst the pomp and ceremonial of his coronation ; and had lingered (not without consciousness of shame to the English) on that spot,—the martyr's memorial,—where the Cardinal of Winchester beheld her perish, by foul and most unnatural murder, at the flaming stake. I had comprised in my travels Domremy, Orleans, Rheims, and Rouen ; and I suppose the annals of mankind record not a parallel to that strange eventful narrative involved in the six years preceding her death at the age of nineteen !

Her "praise is hymn'd by loftier harps than mine"—She lives in the pages of our most veracious chroniclers, of our immortal Shakespeare, and of her own country's most honoured historians and poets ; for her fame was not merely local and transient : it was identified with the glory of national prowess and patriotic virtues ; and when the inhuman prelate cast her ashes into the Seine, all France became her monument. Four hundred and twenty six years have, since that period, added names of undying renown to the annals of her great country's champions and worthies ; but, brilliant as such records are, they have not obliterated the memory of her heroism, or her wrongs ; and every new statue from the atelier of the sculptor, every picture from the studio of the painter, every fresh memorial from the pen of French or English essayists, only serves to brighten the halo which encircles her name, and seems to convert the history of that time into a romance. Such were the reflections that led me to Domremy, and accom-

panied me on my departure from it. The *locale* is obscurity itself, and most "exempt from public haunt;" but this only adds to the contemplative tourist's gratification, and tends to elevate it from mere common place to feelings nearly approaching to ecstasy;—the sense of which is the more enjoyable in being unalloyed by any doubts of authenticity and truth.

CHAPTER XIII.

NEUFCHATEAU, where Jeanne d'Arc was once domiciled in an inn—Not the sprightliest of corn-market towns, yet not barren of amusement, as it proved—Church of St. Nicholas—Another Entombment group—The bigoted young curate: a little theological “sparring”—The Prayer-book of our Church, and “who held the candle!”—England deplorably unproductive, now-a-days, of saints!—A few words on Tradition, from Dryden—Exemplary zeal and devotedness of the French curates—Hawkers of cutlery: their notions of the *desideranda* on a coach-journey—Similar conceptions in our own country—Langres, the Sheffield of France; and worth a day's visit—Some account of the Percheron horses in general use hereabouts: their resemblance to the Suffolk and Clydesdale breeds—First glimpse, after thirty-six years' interval, of the Jura range: and of the *Clos* vineyards—Vines and potatoes growing side by side—Approach to Burgundy—Influence of very small proprietorships of land, abroad and at home: in both countries equally detrimental—Features of the landscape comparable with the richest English scenery—Vinegrowth hereabout scanty: corn abundant—Four handsome greys, harnessed in at the last relai, dash gallantly with the Malle-poste behind them into Dijon.

I LEFT Domremy at noon, and in bright sunshine; but the air was painfully cold; and a brisk scamper across the Bois Chénus, under the auspices of poor Joan's oracular St.

Catherine and St. Margaret, would have been no bad episode in the chapter of the day's history ; but my charioteer and his highly gratified horse (who must have been all astonishment at being allowed three hours' bait after having proceeded eleven miles only) were longing for my signal, and soon dashed off at a spirited pace over the noble bridge across the Meuse, from the foot of which I had taken my view of the Church and Seminary ; and both seemed bent upon reaching Neufchâteau at a hand canter. The straight formal road, bordered with gigantic poplars, lay across meadows that rose, on one side of us, in long slopes extending to the ridge of the Vosgian range of hills ; and I began to anticipate a somewhat duller ride than yesterday's.

The first village of any note that we came to was Coussey ; and here the *præsens numen* made itself (or *herself*, rather) felt, when my only companion turned round with a knowing look and broad grin, and pointed with his whip across the road, to draw my attention to the pump or fountain we were at that moment passing, on the top of which was a tolerably well-formed leaden or wooden statue, about a yard high, painted stone colour, representing the Maid of Domremy. I had descried it before his announcement, and hailed it as an incident to point the moral and adorn the tale of a life on which I was at that very instant ruminating. He merely meant to say " You see we have not forgotten her !"

The Meuse was now, as at St. Mihiel, on my right again ; winding steadily without overflow through luxuriant meadows which extended on both sides of the road, and seemed

to share with wheat and barley crops the whole face of the country, for the greater part of eight miles ; the declivity from the roadside, nevertheless, being abundantly planted with vines, which increased more and more as we drew near at one o'clock to Neufchâteau. Here I missed the Meuse, which had borne away to the right, and found the town situate on a tributary stream which led to the river at a mile's distance. Unluckily I missed the coach, also, which I had reckoned upon as a prompt conveyance to Langres ; and as the voituriers and stable-keepers demanded fancy prices of every unpleasing variety for the hire of even a *charrette à ressorts*, (a sort of dust-cart on springs,) I determined to render their disappointment greater than my own by electing to pass the whole day in a place from which these speculators on chance travellers had concluded, for a certainty, I should scamper away as fast as ennui and fine weather would urge such flight. But let no man exclaim, when thus dropped for the first time among a population of four thousand, " All is barren !"

NEUFCHATEAU, it must be admitted, is one of the "deadly lively" bourgs one may reckon on encountering in cross country travel, and consists of two long streets and a few lanes ; and what the inhabitants may live or thrive upon is not very apparent ; but a corn-market is held there, and *that* always creates a certain amount of weekly business. This unexpected halt, however, afforded me some considerable amount of occupation and amusement ; and when this *passa-tempo* was exhausted, and I trusted to "La Providence" (so was the best house of entertainment designated) for a later repast than usual, which would become the final

prelude to a night journey in the direction of Langres, it required no stretch of optimism to feel assured that all the *contretemps* of the hour or day were for the best.

In my leisurely ramble through this little town where, when it belonged to the Dukes of Lorraine, Hume the historian says Jeanne d'Arc lived as servant at an inn, (a mistake already explained) I soon found my way to the principal church of St. Nicholas, whence, observing the very ordinary style of its interior, I should have strolled forth in quest of something more interesting—even though it were but a pollard elm or a decayed barn,—but, happening to cast a glance, at parting, on the Eastern extremity of the South aisle, I noticed a life-size figure, a painted statue, of very superior form and mould, to examine which I quitted the nave, and turned towards the right into a recess or small lateral chapel lighted by three pointed-arch windows, where I found myself at once in the presence of eight similar statues, standing on a ledge of about a yard and half's height from the pavement of the aisle, and twenty feet or somewhat less, perhaps, in length; each on its own block or stand, (which elevated it about four inches on the ledge,) but most admirably grouped, in illustration of the same subject (the Entombment) to which my reader's attention has been already so particularly directed under the head of St. Mihiel, in Chap. XI.

Extended on a sort of mattress, at the feet of these, lay a splendid stone statue, representing the dead body of our Lord; the carving and painting of which were wonderful; the whole being, beyond all doubt, a study from nature; for not a vein was wanting, and the development of the muscles, of the skin, flesh, and bone, assured the

eye, at a glance, that every minutest detail was a faithful delineation. The painter had emulated the skill of the sculptor ;—(whether at the period of its receiving its last finish from the chisel, or after an interval of years,—for a century, perhaps,—there was no means of ascertaining) for the imitation of all the flesh tints, and of the extravasated blood, especially, in the hands and feet of the dead Christ, was most painfully accurate. Immediately below the extended body was a stone altar.

But for the painting, which invariably spoils statuary,—(and yet in this instance it was really beautiful)—I should have regarded this group as in a very slight degree only inferior to that at St. Mihiel. The folds of the draperies were decidedly much nearer to the standard of Grecian antique.

The first figure to the spectator's left denoted Joseph of Arimathæa. The next, in all probability, was meant for Mary, the wife of Cleopas : the third, exquisitely pathetic in expression, the Virgin Mother of Christ ; immediately behind whom, in the same position with the corresponding statue at St. Mihiel, was John. To his left was Mary, *his* mother ; and, beside her, Mary Magdalene. The three Maries held each a sort of cylindrical cruse or box, supposed to contain the precious spices. Beyond Mary Magdalene, whose hair was represented dishevelled and falling on her shoulders, stood Nicodemus, in the full costume of a Jewish ruler, holding his cap in his left hand. In a narrow lateral niche at right angles to these, on the spectator's right, and nearly two feet lower down than the other statues, stood the Roman Centurion ; his countenance indicating wild astonishment. His left hand sustained a

long spear: his right was uplifted and clenched, as if under the influence of strong and overpowering feelings.

This completed the subject. I would not have missed seeing this work for any consideration of fatigue or trouble that a long and arduous journey from afar might have entailed; and had not the paint marred, in my opinion, the high finish of the sculpture, which, it is evident, must have been marvellously expressive, independently of such adjunct, I incline to believe I should have preferred the Neufchâteau Entombment to that I had admired so much the day before.

At six o'clock the Curate came in, and expressed his surprise and gratification at my *opus operatum*, the finished sketch. Like the generality of his brethren, he admitted he was not conversant with Fine Art, and could not have supposed any particular attention would have been elicited by these statues which, he said, he had hardly examined since he had been attached to the church! People had said they were very old;—old as the sixteenth century,—but he believed nobody cared about them at Neufchâteau; which I thought likely enough! He had never seen an artist near them; he thought, in fact, I had paid the church a great compliment. He elevated his eyebrows in no little amazement on hearing me assert they would be worth a thousand pounds if landed this summer at Dover. “Comment donc! Vingt-quatre mille francs pour ces statues là!” and he went on to say the church stood in deplorable need of a new Organ and several other fittings, and that that sum would supply all that was wanted. I told him it would cost two hundred pounds to carry them to London, where we should set to work and wash off the colouring;

and this appeared to astonish him still more. However, I left him presently afterwards, and went to the coach-office where I had deposited my luggage, and there I *set* my drawing, and secured it from injury by rubbing.

At seven o'clock, happening, in my stroll from street to street, to come upon the same church again, I went in for another inspection of the newly discovered treasure, and felt all my earliest impressions strengthened. On this occasion, I went down into the Crypt; the loftiest I had ever seen; being twenty-four feet in height; in length sixty. The sacristan informed me that Matins were said there, at an early hour, every day in the year. As I quitted the church, the curate crossed my path, and we fell into conversation. The young ecclesiastic soon inferred I was a Protestant, and seemed as much interested in my heresy, as I had been in his parish church's statuary. He was far from conversant with the writings of the New Testament, and proved, as may be imagined, but a sorry disputant. Among other grievances, as he termed them, he said we had ransacked his Church's Mass-Book to make for ours a Form of Congregational Prayer. My reply to this was, that we had held his book up to the Candle of God's Scriptures, by the light of which we detected its errors—had thrown away the worser part of it, to live the purer with the other half. This made him very irate, and he exclaimed emphatically, "That candle of yours was held by the Devil!"—upon which, seeing I was only laughing at his funny attempts to argue, he began to ask why I refused to hear the Church, and live up to her Scriptural doctrines and discipline. I assured him I held to Scripture with faith unfeigned; held to the truth, the whole truth

and nothing but the truth, which appeared all-sufficient for Luther and the Anglican community; though, in the opinion of the Pope and his adherents, it was regarded as too scant a provision; and thus, in defiance of the Bible, they had, themselves, incurred the very condemnation they were always so eager to heap upon others. What condemnation could I mean?

"The plagues," I rejoined, "threatened at the close of the New Testament on all who should hereafter add to the things, to the words, contained in it."

He seemed to have totally forgotten, if he had ever read, the Book of Revelations.

"How do we add?" he asked.

"Why," said I, "you are all like those Jews you so vehemently denounce:—You make the Word of God of none effect by your *traditions*."

(He had appealed to the numerous traditions of the Church, and demanded my implicit credence to them all, wheresoever they helped to build up the [Roman?] Catholic Faith.) To use a well-known phrase in the sparring schools of the day, this hit appeared to *double him up*; for he coloured, bit his nails, and looked about him in a vague manner, as if trying to shift his ground. Would that he had understood English, and been able to follow this passage from old Dryden's "*Religio Laici*!"

"He seems to have recourse
To Pope and councils and *tradition's* force.
If *written* words from time are not secur'd
How can we think have *oral* sounds endured?"

Which, thus transmitted, if one mouth has fail'd
Immortal lies on ages are entail'd :
And that some such have been is prov'd too plain,
If we consider interest, Church and gain."

"Ah!" said he, at length, in a whining tone, "what a pity it is that England, once so staunch in the true faith, should now be the most heterodox and contumacious people of all nations! Unstable and unsound, they hardly know what tenets they have adopted."

"No;" I replied, "we are truly apostolical, and hold fast the form of sound words, and the pure doctrine delivered by the Apostles to the Saints."

"Ah! there are no saints in England now. There *was* a time when your country had more saints in it than any nation in Christendom. Oh! what saints lived there in the good old times, when you held the only true faith!"

"Well," said I, "you need not despair on that subject. I could show you many there. I would introduce you to many a one in my own parish."

"In your *own* parish! Eh! *chez vous? mais comment, donc!*"

When I explained how this could be, and how far from rare such exemplary men and women, husbands and wives, mothers and daughters, were in our heretical country, he backed out, saying:

"*Eh, bien! cela se peut!* May be—may be; but how much greater saints if Roman Catholics!"

This reminded me of the exclamation of one of the Englishmen present at poor Jeanne d'Arc's trial at Rouen,

who, in admiration of her candid and ingenuous answers, remarked to a by-stander, "A deserving young woman, this; if she were but English." But this is the way in which these young bigots argue; if argument that may be called which consists of allegations unsupported by reasoning, and of assertions incapable of proof. I ought not to omit that he stated his intention of saying Mass next morning *for the conversion of England*; and I believe this is a standing order in the dioceses of France. A notice to that effect fell under my notice at the principal church in Boulogne, the year previous.

However, I walked homeward with him to the house where he and his rector resided, and whom he pointed out to me reading his breviary in a neat little garden below the balcony. This new personage on the scene was the living personification of Don Basilio in the "*Barbiere di Seviglia*;" hat not excepted. My late antagonist told him, when he closed his book and meditations, what I had been saying respecting the value of the statues; and communicated to me shortly afterwards the intelligence that the whole lot might be taken away on payment of less than seven thousand five hundred francs; *i. e.* three hundred pounds. I wish they were at this moment standing in all the purity of unpainted stone in our Temple Church, or at St. George's Chapel, Windsor. My belief is, they would be purchasable at half the amount named by Monsieur Le Curé.

It occurred to me, afterwards, what a rare confabulation these two priests would hold at supper-time, on the Communion of Saints, and English heresy! Yet, gentle be our censure, charitable our construction, of the words

and deeds, tenets and opinions of the curates of Most Catholic France. The influence they possess among their parishioners is more considerable at the present period than it was for a quarter of a century preceding the outbreak of the great Revolution of 1789; and *it is richly deserved*. Under all the disadvantages of positive need, and the utter uncertainty of improvement in the means of scanty subsistence, the majority of these lowly ministers of Christ discharge the toilsome duties of each passing day, in and out of Church, among the young and old, the infirm and poor, the sick and the dying, with a faithfulness rarely emulated, never surpassed, by the "Working Clergy" of Protestant England; and with a singleness of mind and purpose, from which not all the perversions and superstitions of their erring Church should induce us to withhold our admiration and respect. These men, moreover, have not closed their eyes to the Light which (as knowledge has been advancing, and education enlarging its range and views,) is come to all, and has benefited all, since the abuses engrafted on the Romish Faith by ignorance and priest-craft, in a darker age, have ceased to tyrannize over the minds and consciences of its adherents. The mass of human inventions is shrunk into harmless insignificance; and to fear God and honour the King, and to "hear the Church," so far as it inculcates moral and righteous living, and warns her sons against infidelity, seems now to suggest the Curate's theme in the Parochial School, and the Preacher's text in the Pulpit.

I left the young divine, here brought upon the scene, with an impression that he professed these principles as a point of bounden-duty, and would act up to them; how-

ever defective in his comprehension of our reasons for dissenting from his creed and ritual.

Thus, upon the whole, my unlooked-for sojourn in Neufchâteau was not without an interesting episode, if not an edifying incident. The long interval might have bred *ennui*, and proved dull enough : we cannot always expect to find "books in the sunny brooks, sermons in stones, and good in every thing ;" but "live and learn," is a good motto ; and if a traveller act in the spirit of it he will not often be compelled to exclaim, even after a compulsory halt of twelve hours in a small corn-market, "*Perdidi diem !*"*

My fellow-traveller in the night coach gave me to understand that the country we passed through during the three hours' darkness in which we were proceeding towards Langres, possessed not a single feature of attractiveness. The road was very hilly, and the moon-light enabled us to observe the immense extent of corn grown in these wide spreading valleys of Champagne. The vineyards producing the renowned wine, specially characterized by that name, lie Northward. The district of Upper Marne, which we were now traversing, yields but little wine ; that stimulus of the animal spirits being hereabouts superseded by the "staff of life," strengthening man's frame ; and a far more valuable consideration does it involve. As the farm labourers say, "A man can work upon good wheaten bread, but not upon drink." The finest flour was in course of preparation here ; but, to show how late the harvest season would be, the grain was still almost green in the ear, though it was the 23rd day of July.

* "*Perdidi diem*"—(I have^{*} lost a day). A favourite saying of the Roman Emperor Titus.

As the morning sun began to shed its brightness, the face of the country became radiant and joyous in the abundance of store; but presented not a feature which pencil would fain have illustrated. Hardly any woods or full grown trees appeared in the whole range of view; nor hedges, nor water; no church tower or spire, no mill or cottage relieved the monotony; and when on glancing at the pages of my hand-book, I found the observation recorded that the country between Chaumont and Langres is just such as a traveller would prefer to cross *by night*, I could not but arrive at the same conclusion in respect of the line of road between Neufchâteau and the latter place. However, between seven and eight o'clock, Langres appeared in sight, on the mountain-like elevation visible for upwards of an hour and half before we began to ascend the steep hill leading up to the town. We had now taken farewell of the Meuse whose valleys had proved the charm of so many sunny days' travel, and whose course to the ocean would flow through as many miles as we were at that moment distant from London, till, after adorning Belgium with many a picture of the most interesting river-scenery, it should fall into the North sea below Rotterdam. A far more noble and abounding stream, however, was soon to assert and maintain its claim to honourable remembrance; for in the course of a week I hoped to renew intimacy with the Rhone, compared with whose banks and waters the Meuse, it must be admitted, subsides into insignificance; but they are both beautifying streams; and the fairest French and Flemish provinces are in no light degree indebted to their respective courses.

LANGRES is a strong fortress, and manifests every appearance of being such ; but in these times of peacefulness in their home territories the French soldiery, sauntering about its streets and ramparts, find but little to do in so quiet a garrison ; while the cutlers are grinding and polishing, tempering and cutting from morn till night. It is a noted place for the manufacture of knives, forks, scissors, razors, and other such ware ; and had we staid in the town half an hour instead of ten minutes, all the passengers *en route* to Dijon would have been incited by retail venders of the “mobile” class to invest largely in carving knives, steels, corkscrews, and bodkins, which the holders of such stock on sale fondly imagine to be articles chiefly in request among stage-coach travellers ; just as I have seen dozens of sponges and couples of puppy dogs held up at coach windows at the White Horse Cellar, in the days of “the Defiance,” and “the Quicksilver Mail.” There was a tray hastening *à grande vitesse* across the square, towards our carriage, just as we left the inn-yard ; the skewers, spurs, and corkscrews upon which would have been pressed upon us, no doubt, as *desiderata* and most appropriate to our situation at that moment !

This military Sheffield of France is a town of high antiquity ; and no one, learned or unlearned in Cæsar’s Commentaries, could behold and not admire it, soaring like the Acropolis into air, with the two towers of its Romanesque Cathedral, the government buildings, bastions, batteries, and barracks, on one of those volcano-shaped hills which Nature herself seems to have designed as means of munition and defence for the sons of men. Before the day of “the mighty Julius,” it was called

Andomatunum ; it afterwards bore the name of Lingones, after the appellation of the whole tribe of Gauls who originally held this part of the country. The primitive population, however, migrated into Italy, and settled near Trieste. Nothing survives of all the brick and stone compacted here by those master-builders, and masters of the world, the ancient Romans, except an arch erected in the early part of the third century, in honour of the two most literary and respectable of Rome's later Emperors, Gordianus and his son ; and this, like the *Porta Martis* already mentioned under the head of Rheims, has long since been made a component part of the ramparts.

A day might be whiled away amusingly enough in Langres but had I devoted a chapter, or even half, to my report of it, I question whether the general reader would have honoured the mention of *Gallia Lugdunensis*, or of young Gordian's library of sixty-two thousand volumes, or of Schwartzenburg's Campaign, to the extent of reading my lucubrations on either the ancient or modern history of the place ; and as Dijon and Macon lay a-head, and the Côte d'Or, Chambertin, Clos Vougeot, and many other such localities, the very names of which, as my fellow-passengers observed, were words to rejoice in, I saw with great complacency the fourth team we had now had of Percheron horses attached to the carriage in which, galloping towards Burgundy and its "*Clos*," we might expect to reach the ancient capital of its Dukes before three o'clock in the afternoon, and complete the fourteenth hour of our journey. A-propos of names to rejoice in, as we rattled through the main street, I saw that of Monsieur J. Têtevide (empty head !) over a shop-front. We are all

candidates for a happy immortality ; but an aspirant to high earthly office and station with this damaging cognomen ought not to be too sanguine. Such names, however, may be matched, if not surpassed, in our own country.

The Percheron horse above mentioned is a staunch, valiant, high-mettled creature of Norman race,—almost white,—and the favourite “machiner” in this part of the country. I observed that all public vehicles between Rheims and Dijon were horsed either by the Ardennes or Percheron breed. The latter stands about fifteen hands high, with short legs, broad chest, small head, short pointed ears, and round barrel-shaped ribs, close up to the hip-bone. These light active animals take the long hills against collar with a good-will and persevering exertion of strength which the Ardennes and Flemish teams, trotting over flat country, with less ponderous loads, fail to exhibit. They resemble in this respect the Suffolk “Punch,” and the Clydesdales, so often seen in the market at Glasgow.

For several hours I rode on the look-out for Vineyards ; but wheat and barley crops, mile after mile, covered the surface of the land. We passed the frontier of Burgundy at about half way between Langres and Dijon ; the road becoming more and more white, and the peculiar shingly soil prevailing on either side, which I had observed to be generally the precursor of vine growth ; and here, sure enough, the grape of grapes began to appear. For the first time, also, since entering France, I met again my old acquaintances the walnut-trees. They now mustered in large force, and were discernible, at brief intervals, more

or less, through a hundred leagues afterwards. The wood is in greater request than ever for gun stocks.

About noon, one of my fellow-passengers pointed out to me, on the left, the first peaks of the Jura. I had not seen these "mountains of old name" for five and thirty years. What reminiscences arise in such moments! And, even now, we must have been upwards of eighty miles distant from that misty shroud which hung above the grey range on the horizon.

After passing Thiel Château I observed the large stone walled enclosures within which, to the extent, occasionally, of fifteen acres, such grapes are grown as produce first class wines. These enclosures are called "Clos," (Clos Vougeot, for instance, or the Enclosure of the Vines of Vougeot). The abundance of rock in this district, swelling forth in huge boulders out of the soil appropriated to vines, is very remarkable. The vines surrounded by small stones, resembling fragments of plaister from an old decayed ceiling, grow like so many raspberry plants springing out of the rubble one sees in the gaps where a house has been pulled down. It is stated to be whitish limestone, mixed with shells.

After seeing our Graperies in England, where the roots of the vine revel in the richest of artificial soils outside the glass-house, the aspect of these French vineyards is startling to the British eye. The same soil, however, was observable on the Rhine, where I remember having run down a short cut into the main road at Stolzenfels, through a large and thriving (unenclosed) vineyard, and felt my heels bruised by thousands of stony fragments resembling

small tiles broken up into bits of three inches square ; and found my clothes powdered with white dust, as if I had been walking through a windmill in full work.

The rearing, however, of every species of vegetation must be a very easy matter in the locality of which I am now speaking. Such an accommodatory soil I never had seen. In the space of eight acres lay distributed a crop of dwarf beans, ditto of potatoes, eighty yards' length by twelve of vines ; then rye, maize, barley, and beans and potatoes repeated.

Considering the value of wine in France, since the prevalence of disease in the grape, one cannot but behold with astonishment row after row of vines planted in the trenches formed by the ridging of the potato crop. Now this would lead us to believe that the roots of the vine, producing the grape of the district, require not such extent of kindly nourishment as is generally supposed to be indispensable towards a remunerative vintage. The potato is a decidedly exhausting plant, returning but little to the soil it grows in ; and one or the other must be the worse for this joint use of mother Earth. The vine, nevertheless, exhibits itself everywhere without arrogating to itself the upper station.

Apple, cherry, pear, walnut and peach trees stood in the plot of ground I was casually examining, surrounded by vines. It was impossible to say whether the vines were growing in an orchard, or the fruit trees in a vineyard. The cultivation of grapes seemed to be based upon the maxim that "every little helps!" If a patch of potato plant exhibit unequivocal symptoms of disease, the con-

demned roots are immediately dug up, and vines are inserted in their stead.

I noticed a large field of wheat with a patch, twenty yards square, of vines in the very centre. The grain in that part had been destroyed by wire-worms. The farmer turned up the ground and introduced vines, leaving them to take care of themselves; for the wheat had been sown broad cast, and no hoeing could be resorted to, either for the removal of weed, or for ridges. On this North side, however, of Dijon, the grape is altogether secondary in consideration compared with the corn crops. The latter abound in magnificent breadths. I saw five hundred acres' extent of white wheat; thick in plant, long in straw, heavy in ear: the property, probably, of eight or ten different owners; but no partition was visible. The spectacle of so large a provision of bread is very genial, and, it may be said, impressive; but the face of the country, in all other respects, is cheerless enough in the absence of even the smallest hovel or lodge for the habitation of labourers. For seven miles' length, perhaps, not a roof is in sight, and not more than two barns. The fact is, two-thirds of the standing corn would be cut down by the proprietors themselves; men enjoying a patrimony of seventeen or nineteen hundred francs a-year* in real estate, and who farm their own land with the aid of their sons, and two or three hired labourers, all of whom, the employers and the employed, live in the adjacent town or village; or, it may be, on the premises of some capacious old mansion, château,

* Seventy or eighty pounds.

or manor-house, on the skirts of the farm lands, where the men are lodged and boarded, and the horses and wagons are also stationed. This is in accordance with the system to which the laws of inheritance bind the estate owners of France: a system which has multiplied petty proprietorship *ad infinitum*, and impoverished for ever the landed gentry of the kingdom. A similar tenure prevailed two hundred years ago in our own country.

The most authentic writers of the seventeenth century, in their statistical accounts of the population and supposed wealth of England, make it appear that, at that period, not less than a hundred and sixty thousand proprietors, constituting, with their families, more than a seventh of the whole people, derived their subsistence from little freehold estates, averaging in value between sixty and seventy pounds a-year. In short, the number of persons occupying their own land was greater than the number of those who farmed the land of others.

Such a condition of things would now be unmitigated evil. Every rood of land will *not* maintain its man, as the Utopian theory would fain have seen realized. The yeomanry of the seventeenth century were a legion of strength for the well-being of the rural districts; but such puny estates exercise not the slightest beneficial influence in parishes at the present date; either by duly proportionate employment of hands, or by that pecuniary support of beneficial institutions essential to the times, and to the condition of the poor, which it is the first duty and obligation of land-ownership to contribute. There is an *esprit-de-corps* in France which combines hearts, hands, and purses in its Communes, when any positive good is to be effected

by universal co-operation. The subscriptions are small, but every one comes forward with his quota ; and *the thing is speedily done*, and in many a poor district it is done in the spirit of " fervent charity among themselves."

It is not thus on our side of the channel. A village in any one of our counties made up of exclusively little proprietorships, " living from hand to mouth," and employing the poor in harvest only, or in occasional road labour, would, in all probability, be the most beggarly and ill-conditioned in the whole province, *sans* school, *sans* lending-library, *sans* clothing, blanket, or lying-in-fund ; *sans* coals-ticket, *sans* everything !

At about an hour's distance from Dijon, I espied three tall chimneys, sixty feet high, on the premises of an artificial manure manufactory. The French agriculturists are wide awake in this matter ; and, whether for topsoil or subsoil fertilization, reserve both fluid and substance with economy and forecast which our tenant farmers, ever slow of heart to believe in truly scientific theories, would do well to emulate. In my published work on this subject, in the year 1848, I described the whole process as witnessed by me in Touraine and the Seine Inférieure ; and in the " Ramble through Normandy" of last year, reported my inspection of one of these Fabriques d'Engrais Animalisés at Caen. They are effecting immense improvements in French husbandry, and are in constant activity in the neighbourhood of most of the large towns ; as has already been shown in Chapter III., under the head of " Bondy," fifteen miles distant from Paris.

The approaches to Dijon on the North-Eastern road, by which we were proceeding, traverse a beautiful range of

country comparable with the richest specimens of English scenery. The hills in the Eastward direction exhibit a continuous range of acclivities cultivated to their summits : corn in abundance ; vines hardly to be discovered anywhere : but we were now arrived at our last relay, and Monsieur le Conducteur, all bustle and activity, brightened up out of a dreamy existence alongside of the “ mécanique,”* to prepare for our *entrée* into the ancient capital whose spires and towers shortly afterwards rose before us in the horizon ; and giving a sedulous helping hand to the ostler, and a nod of special approbation, as he trotted out four handsome greys to shed *éclat* on our arrival at the Bureau des Expéditions, began to carol a wild and lengthy tune which lasted till, in more of sunshine than of dust, our ponderous vehicle completed the final kilomètre, and dashed gallantly into the bright and pleasant streets of Dijon.

* The name of the apparatus, governed by a winch, which stays the action of the two hinder wheels in a large carriage, when descending hills.

CHAPTER XIV.

DIJON : (" L'Hôtel de la Cloche)—The English rarely seen there—Its resemblance to Oxford—Supposed to have been the site of a camp in the days of Julius Cæsar—St. Benignus, martyr, A.D. 178—Dijon, capital of the dukedom of Burgundy, in 1015—Philip the Bold, John the Fearless, Charles the Rash—Great part of the province annexed to France by Louis XI.—The whole of it by Francis I.—Museum and reminiscences and relics of the above-mentioned dukes—Salle des Gardes—Stupendously lofty chimney-piece—The "Retables" of the dukes of Burgundy—Wanderings of a statuette of St. George—Alexis Piron—Guyton Morveau, the regicide chemist—Maret, duke of Bassano—Monastery of the Chartreux outside of the town—Anecdote of Francis I. at the tomb of John the Fearless—The well of Moses—The cathedral—Lamentable demolition of magnificent churches—" L'homme au panier " statue.

THE arrival recorded in the last chapter was followed up by the occupation of rather indifferent apartments in the Hôtel de la Cloche ; the favourite house, as I was informed ; but, among the recollections of many temporary homes, its fair front would pass for nothing ; and were I to revisit the scene, I could not say with the Thane of Cawdor, "*The Bell invites me !*" for the manifest want of cleanliness is not easily forgotten ; and the dark, red, slippery floors in

the best bed-rooms were unquestionably what the serving-men stated them to be,—“of a peculiar composition.” Were the English frequently to arrive here, this opprobrium would speedily cease to tarnish the repute of an otherwise well-conducted establishment; our civilizing influence and refining processes leading invariably to a wide and continual use of soap and hot water; that self same “mauvaise habitude,” so earnestly deprecated by the Parisian waiter of whom mention was made in Chapter II. of this Volume.

I found myself located, nevertheless, in one of the prettiest little towns in France; abounding with stately edifices, monumental antiquities, churches and palaces, homes of charity, and halls of science; well built streets, excellent shops of all descriptions, elegantly formed gardens, squares, promenades, boulevards, and other such annexations to their chief towns as the French people delight and excel in; for the use and recreation, in this instance, of a population of thirty thousand inhabitants. Our countrymen are very rarely seen here: for, as on the Great Eastern Line, the general rush is to Strasburg and the Rhine, so, on the Lyons Railway, few travellers are to be found lingering on the Ouche and the Suzon, when less than four hours’ journey would secure their landing on the banks of the Saone and the Rhone.

DIJON, distant two hundred miles from Paris, is essentially French in its features; and there is not a town in our country, except Oxford, which in many points it resembles, displaying within the same area such a variety of architectural beauties, and so many objects of the most interesting historical antiquity. The sketch I brought home could

hardly fail to recall the features of the Isis and Cherwell to any eye familiar with the University situate on their banks. It was taken from the little bridge across the Ouche, in the direction of what is called the Viaduct of the Arquebuse; and seemed to offer itself as the most characteristic memorial I could carry away with me; though there is much for the pencil to do in and around "this interesting town," as my talented friend J. L. Petit* may well term it, in mentioning the "many domestic remains of the Burgundian style" he found in it.

There is no satisfactory solution of the origin of its name; but the town is considered, by the best authorities on such points, to have owed its first existence to the formation of a camp on its site in the days of Julius Cæsar; and St. Benignus, (after whom the Cathedral is named), the first Christian missionary among the Pagans of Burgundy, was reputed to have suffered martyrdom here by command of Marcus Aurelius, A.D. 178.

After the numerous and harassing vicissitudes of alternate subjugation and ascendancy, as the fortune of war prospered or defeated the prowess of the Burgundians, between the sixth and eleventh century, Dijon became, in the year 1015, the capital of the Dukedom, under Robert, grandson of Hugh Capet, first king of France, of the third dynasty; and during four centuries and a half, in the course of which Philip the Bold, John the Fearless, and Charles the Rash, successively promoted its political and commercial interests, Burgundy was independent of

* Author of "Remarks on Architectural Character : on Church Architecture and Architectural Studies in France."

France. In the reign, however, of Louis XI., a large district of it was annexed to the Crown, and in the course of four subsequent reigns it became an integral part of the kingdom; Francis the First refusing to hear mention, even, of the condition by which he covenanted in 1526 to restore it to the Emperor Charles.

I merely touch upon this extraneous matter for the sake of a brief complimentary mention of the Dukes whose names are so continually forced upon the traveller's attention during his stay in the place. The ancient palace of these warlike rulers, the buildings they raised, the institutes they founded, the endowments they bestowed, their magnificent creations of princely *appareil* and ornament, their effigies, tombs, and relics are conspicuous objects of notice, and exhibit more remarkable memorials of the fourteenth and fifteenth century than are to be found among all the mediæval curiosities yet remaining in France.

It may suffice to say that a long morning spent in the Hôtel de Ville (once the Ducal Palace) would amuse even the most casual and desultory observer more than the generality of such inspections; and the tombs of Philip the Bold and John the Fearless, by whose side is seen the recumbent effigy of his duchess, Margaret of Bavaria, are perhaps the finest monumental antiquities of this kind in the world. They were originally in the Chartreux monastery outside the city. These statues appear to be somewhat larger than life size; and, like those of which such distinguished mention has been made at Neufchâteau, are painted. The colour, in this instance, however obtrusive, is interesting insomuch as the primary coating was put on when the monuments were first executed; and thus gives

an accurate representation of the state costume of that period.

In the noble hall* of the palace (the Hôtel de Ville) where these two splendid monuments occupy so prominent a space, and shed a halo, so to speak, on all around, (the angels' wings especially impressing the mind of the beholder), is the vast Gothic chimney-piece, *thirty* feet high, and *twenty* wide! The two statues on what, in ordinary phrase, would be called the mantel-shelf, clad in complete steel armour inlaid with gold, appear of as moderate dimension as any middling-sized Sèvres or Dresden vases would on our drawing-room chimney-pieces; yet they are each six feet two in height.

On the left side of this majestic chamber are placed the portable folding altar screens or frames of the Dukes of Burgundy: a work of the fourteenth century. They open out, like highly wrought panels, profusely gilt and painted, to the length of sixteen feet and upwards, and a yard and half high; and are filled with wooden statuettes, (some gilt and painted, but the majority uncoloured,) varying from nine to four inches in height. Sixty out of some scores of such figures are grouped in illustration of the death of John the Baptist, the temptation of St. Anthony, martyrdoms of various saints, the Adoration of the Magi, the Sepulchre and Entombment of Christ. The remaining statuettes, the smallest, are distributed through the two frames; and I suppose the world contains not such another specimen of the highest excellence to which the art of carving in wood has ever attained. They are the work of Jacques de Baerze,

* Formerly entitled the Salle des Gardes.

a Flemish sculptor, and were completed by him in the year 1391, in fulfilment of a commission from Duke Philip the Bold, who caused them to be erected in the church of the Chartreux Convent he had founded eight years previously just outside the town, in the direction of the road from Paris through Auxerre to Dijon. There, together with the sepulchral monuments already mentioned, they remained during four hundred years, and, on the suppression of monasteries, were removed in a very much damaged state, to the Cathedral; but the ignorance of the clergy who regarded them as little else than musty old church furniture of the dark ages, occasioned them still worse injury from whitewash, damp, and cobwebs; and it was only through the earnest application of a Monsieur Morelet, the mayor of the town, that one of these invaluable frames was ceded to the municipal body, and after ingenious repairation which redeemed all the mischief they had sustained, gained admission into the principal saloon,—the Guard Room or Hall above mentioned, in the Hôtel de Ville. This took place six and thirty years since. Eight years afterwards, Boisville, Bishop of Dijon, consented to send away from the Cathedral the companion frame, in consideration of certain pictures to be given as adornments of the episcopal palace, and of a seminary at Plombières, and a new convent founded by the prelate. By these arrangements the *chef-d'œuvre*, here under notice, became the property of the Department, and may still survive some centuries.

It is unquestionably the most perfect sample of its kind in existence, and though still in obscurity, (for who goes to Dijon?) has been acknowledged by competent judges to

be the completest illustration of the costume and style of the fourteenth century that archæologists can adduce ; either for mediæval subjects, church-window painting, or similar revivals of early art.

It struck me, as I gazed on the multitudinous groups of gilt figures, that one of them was particularly familiar to my memory. The effigy of St. George in complete panoply, (painted, and silvered, and here and there gilt,) placing his foot on the vanquished dragon.* Before I left Dijon, the following particulars relative to this figure came under my notice, confirmatory of the surmise here alluded to :—

The Savans of France regarded it as the most authentic model of an armed Knight at the close of the fourteenth century, and it is become a standard figure ; how, I shall briefly explain. During the period of the detention of these two panels, covered with dust and defilements, in some obscure corner of the Cathedral, this single little statue, not above ten inches in height, attracted the notice of a broker who unceremoniously detached it from the general group, and, leaving its niche vacant, kept it in his possession till an acquaintance in the same line of business begged it of him ; and he, in his turn, handed it over to a third party, through whom it passed into the possession of a connoisseur, a keeper of the records at Lyons, who at once set it up in his cabinet of antiquities ; but, with the worthy design of securing its restoration to the consecrated relic from whence it had been so unwarrantably purloined.

* It is introduced in Knight's admirable " Illustrations of Old England."

He accordingly apprized the keeper of the Dijon Museum of his having obtained the 'St. George' belonging to the Ducal "Retable," as it was called : and he, being fully aware of its interesting character, caused a mould to be made, from which were produced a large number of casts. He then presented this mould to the chief modeller at the Museum of the Louvre in Paris, (Monsieur Jacquet) for the purpose of a still larger number of casts being supplied to any enthusiastic admirers of ancient armour who might be desirous of possessing so genuine a specimen of the suits of mail worn in 1390. The original was then replaced in the niche which it occupies at this moment in the Hall of the Tombs, or Salle des Gardes, at the Town Hall of Dijon.

In the same palatial edifice is a large gallery of paintings, illustrative of the various great schools of Art, in Italy, Spain, Holland, Flanders, Germany, and France. There are also statues and casts of great value. Among the busts of French Savans and worthies, I recognised that of Alexis Piron, born at Dijon in 1689. The point and humour of the epitaph, which is quoted on the pedestal supporting the bust, will be better appreciated on view of the following brief notice of this "odd fellow's" history. His father, who was an apothecary, had gained some degree of repute as a writer of comic verse and burlesques, especially in the broadest dialects of Burgundy. The son, a well-read and accomplished young man, evinced a similar taste ; and was to have practised at the bar, had not the pecuniary embarrassments into which his family unexpectedly fell, defeated that design ; and he became clerk to a financier at Dijon ; and next, a copyist at

eighteen-pence a-day, in Paris. His most successful labour, however, proved to be the composition of dramatical pieces for the stage. He was much admired by Montesquieu, and held no insignificant rank as a humorous writer and epigrammatist; but no interest or influence could realize to him the most eager wish of his heart—admission into the French Academy. The satirical compositions of his earlier years, in which many members of that learned body found themselves introduced, with more of the ludicrous than their sense of Academical dignity could tolerate, caused his repeated rejection; as a slight compensation for which Louis XV bestowed upon him a pension of forty pounds a-year; but Piron never forgave the Academicians; and, ridiculing their body, even in death, desired that the following epitaph should be inscribed on his tomb, (in January, 1773.)

“ Ci gît qui ne fut rien—
Pas même academicien.”

which might be interpreted thus :

“ Here lies one who was nothing, and held no position !
No, not even the rank of an academicien.”

A marble tablet in the outer wall of the Hôtel de Ville, overhanging the court which leads to the Post Office, (situate also in that vast building,) bears this inscription, (translated) :

“ In this palace were born—
John the Fearless, 28 May, 1371.
Philip the Good, 30 June, 1396.
Charles the Bold, 1433.

The Hôtel de Ville comprises nearly all the public offices and bureaux, and, not among its least important and beneficial departments, a splendid library containing forty-eight thousand volumes, and five hundred and seventy manuscripts. Dijon has for ages past been a seat of learning, and has produced, at various epochs, several eminent men, whose reputation was not limited to France. Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux,* was born here. I saw his paternal residence, No. 10, Place St. Jean;—also Crébillon, the renowned Tragic Poet, in 1674, who used to compose his most effective scenes as he strode up and down the winding alleys of the Royal gardens in Paris, to which his friend Duvernet, the Naturalist, had given him a private key; and where the gardener, witnessing his excited manner, and overhearing some very terrible exclamations, went away and gave information that a maniac had escaped from the Lunatic Asylum. Rameau, also, in 1683, styled the Newton of Harmony; whose dissertation on the principle of harmony stamped his character with the world as a musician of first-rate science. His theory taught that harmony rested on one single principle, the fundamental bass;—on which he proved all else to depend. He was held in high estimation by Handel, and possessed such facility in adapting words to music that he once offered to set a whole Dutch gazette to music, if any one would challenge him to the performance.

Guyton Morveau, also, the regicide chymist, was born here in 1737. He was advocate-general in the parliament of Dijon, but relinquished law for chymistry in which he

effected many most valuable improvements and served the cause of Science at large. Then, betaking himself to politics, he became the most virulent enemy of the emigrants and clergy; and, as a member of the National Convention in 1791, when representing the Côte d'Or, voted energetically for the death of Louis XVI. He sat in the Council of Five Hundred in 1797, and became under Bonaparte a member of the Legion of Honour, and a baron of the Empire, a member of the National Institution, a director of the Polytechnic School, and administrator of the Mint. Perhaps the only chymist that ever lived to pass through so many and such remarkable phases. He attained the age of seventy-eight years, and died six months subsequently to the defeat of his Imperial patron at Waterloo. Maret, also, Duke of Bassano, (who, though a civilian, was present at that ever memorable battle,) was born at Dijon in 1763. This was the man, (a clever and a faithful one, nevertheless, with all his faults,) of whom Napoleon used to say, not a shot could be fired without Maret having something to do with it; for although not a soldier, he always accompanied the Emperor on the field. His elevation to a dukedom made him arrogant; and Talleyrand, less complimentary than his Imperial master, used to say:—

“In all France I know but one greater ass than Maret; and that is the Duke of Bassano!”

He lived near Dijon in 1826; but has been long since dead.

I have always found the knowledge of such facts as these, in connection with the memory of men who have lived, moved, and had their being in the streets, and houses, and places of public resort in any town comprised in my

plan de route, a considerable addition to the gratifications derivable from foreign travel. It enhances the interest attaching to a new scene of inspection and enquiry, and supersedes mere common-place by associations and reflections tending to render every day's rambles fresh sources of recreation and improvement.

One of the many interesting vestiges of olden times and the men thereof in the immediate vicinity of Dijon is the site of the Convent of the Chartreux on the road to Auxerre. I speak of the site: for, in fact, there are now mere remnants and relics left of the ancient religious house; part of a cloister, a portion of the refectory, the portal of the church, and a stone pulpit. The Well of Moses, as it is termed, is likewise in the precincts. The premises have been built upon; and the above-mentioned remains of the original establishment were worked up in the modern ground-plan and elevation of a Lunatic Asylum; and this, after nearly five centuries' lapse, is the final appropriation of a spot selected by Duke Philip the Bold, on account of its admirable position as regarded salubrity, beauty, and convenience, to be another St. Denys, as it were, within whose consecrated walls, and under the guardianship of whose pious inmates, the Dukes of Burgundy should sleep in death—entombed in all the magnificence of princely burial and monument. The first stone was laid in the year 1379; three years after the decease of our Edward, the Black Prince; and nine years were employed in the completion of the buildings on a scale of expence which lavished a princely revenue in every department of the works. The most celebrated

artists of the age were retained to execute the several parts of one grand design. Clamorack for the stained glass windows; Claus Sluter for the statuary; and Jean Duliége for the joinery—under the superintendence of Drouchet de Champmartin, the master-builder and architect. Of all the splendid creations of combined skill, labour, and purest taste that enriched this ancient monastery, nothing, as has been already stated, remains on its site except the insignificant portions apparent at intervals of space in the present modern edifice. The only really remarkable object among these is the cistern, or tank, called “The Well of Moses.” This is an elaborately sculptured stone canopy, or baldaquin, about twenty-two feet high, which formerly supported a cross of the same height. It rests on the brink of a hexagonal pit, or reservoir; and displays on its six sides the life-size statues, in stone, of Moses, David, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Isaiah.

These are the work of Claus Sluter, and are really beautiful specimens of his genius and conceptions. His notion, however, with regard to Moses’s hair is too peculiar to escape any Englishman’s eye or smiles. The great legislator is arrayed in a perruque, corresponding in every minutest particular with the full-bottomed wig of George the Second’s reign, to which, nevertheless, this statue was anterior by three hundred and fifty years.

The portal of the original church still stands, exhibiting the statues of Philip the Bold and Margaret of Flanders; but it is difficult to conceive the activity of demolition which must have laboured to annihilate so vast an extent

of masonry, massive stone work, beams and pillars of oak, and leave not so much, even at the beginning of the eighteenth century, as would have filled an ordinary waggon. The destroyers must have dealt with the Chartreux, as the modern Romans did with the Coliseum, till the interposition of the Pope, consecrating the amphitheatre, and erecting a cross, put an end to the general spoliation; though not till four palaces had been erected in Rome, built entirely with its stones.

Francis the First visited the Monastery in his day, and requested the Prior to shew him the tomb of John the Fearless. In compliance with the royal request, the great slab which secured the coffin was raised, and the skeleton, which had lain there upwards of a century in its resting-place, was at once revealed. As the monarch bent over all that was left to tell of the fate of a murdered man, the ecclesiastic, lowering his hand into the coffin, turned the scull round, and exposed the ghastly evidence of a violent and cruel death,—the hole made by the battle-axe of Tanneguy-Duchâtel, who, with Louvet his accomplice, sprung over the barricade of the bridge at Montereau, and laid the duke dead at the feet of Charles VII. (believed by many to have been privy to the design); Louvet's sword, also, penetrating the prostrate body. As Francis gazed on the fracture, the Prior addressed him in these emphatic words:—

“Sire! you behold the aperture through which the English entered France!”

I returned from the *Maison des Fous*, the Chartreux, where the shouts and raving of many lunatics were distress-

ingly audible "in the pale moonlight," whereby, as Sir Walter says of Melrose Abbey, I saw the Cathedral of Dijon "aright,"

"When buttress and buttress alternately
Seem framed of ebon and ivory :—"

for it came upon the eye with advantage of outline and colour that gave dignity to the whole mass of building, and enhanced the general effect of its characteristic features, the two towers (of the twelfth century) and its twisted spire, two hundred and ninety feet high, which might be assigned to as early a date,—judging by its Gothic aspect,—but which in fact was erected in 1742, to supply the loss of the original steeple destroyed by lightning in 1625. It is made of wood, covered with shingle imitating small slates; and the spiral line carried up through its entire height conveys an idea, far from pleasing, of its being all askew! By night all this is "toned down;" and the ancient pile looms in the distance with no unimpressive grandeur and venerableness.

The desecration, however, of Dijon's churches has been deplorable indeed. St. Philibert's, in which the lapse of seven centuries had not produced natural decay, is now a hay and straw repository. It must have been a beautiful temple in its day of sanctity and honour. St. John's, of four hundred years' antiquity, was appropriated to the same purposes; but now serves as a fish and vegetable market-house! St. Stephen's, the crypt of which was the place of meeting resorted to by the Christians of the fourth

century, for greater security from persecution and violence, had risen into a noble Abbey Church in the thirteenth century, and held thronging congregations in the early part of the eighteenth; but is now a corn-market. The Church of the Carmelites, once annexed to their convent, and an object of general admiration in the seventeenth century, is now a barrack and military prison.

Three churches remain intact. St. Benignus, or the Cathedral, founded in 1280; Nôtre Dame, consecrated in 1334, and completed in 1445; whose roof is surmounted by the clock and its three statues, (man, woman, and child), that strike the hours and quarters in a massive iron frame-work brought in the year 1382 from Courtrai by Philip the Bold, when he had destroyed that town and its entire population. The clock was considered, at that epoch, to be a marvel of artistical genius and ingenuity; and Jacques Marqués, a dialist of the Netherlands, achieved an immortality of five centuries as its maker, besides giving his name to the three figures above mentioned, whom the town-people call "The Jacquemars." I saw two similar bell-strikers in a church tower, afterwards, at Moulins in Bourbonnais.

The third church still existing in its integrity is St. Michael's; the portals of which were the design of Hugh Sambin, the architect, who raised that beautiful temple, St. Eustache, in Paris. I saw in this church another Entombment group of five figures; under the first arch, on entry, in the South aisle. The statues were mediocre enough; but a well-painted transparency (on canvas, or white holland), immediately above the recess or cave, representing Joseph of Arimathæa's new tomb, exhibited the

hill country around Jerusalem at sunrise ; and had really an admirable effect.

In front of it stood three stone crosses. I suppose the five figures would represent Peter and John, and Mary Magdalene, Joanna, wife of Chuza, and Mary, the mother of James, arriving at the empty tomb on the morn of the Lord's resurrection ; but the light was so dim on the occasion of my visit, that I could not clearly distinguish whether there was or was not any statue personifying the dead Christ. If there were, the painting overhead would be intended to pourtray sunset. Painting and sculpture seldom or never harmonize in such juxtaposition ; and the illustration here described appeared somewhat too dioramic for the *locale* in which they attracted attention.

The demolition of the churches above mentioned occurred some time previous to the great Revolution. The population of the town, at the present time, is less than thirty thousand. A hundred years ago it amounted not to more than half that number ; but one cannot help supposing that the inhabitants previous to that date must have been far more numerous, as the provisions for public worship seem so disproportionate.

The Place d'Armes, and its Crescent in front of the Town Hall, is a lively, pleasant square, or area, worthy of all the admiration lavished on it. It resembles one of those street scenes in theatres, which the spectator inclines to consider far handsomer and prettier than reality ever is ; and this is the justest encomium I could bestow upon it. After asking for direction and guidance from many persons, and threading several intricate passages, I succeeded in finding the house in the Rue des Forges through which

entry is gained into the small court-yard of a mansion celebrated some centuries ago as the residence of the English ambassadors. The Gothic stair leading from this yard into the interior of the building is the chief object of interest, and has not been overrated. Its summit exhibits one of the most singular freaks of humour in architectural design that France numbers among her many amusing relics of the olden time.

At the topmost step, on a low pedestal, stands a statue, about four feet six in height, of a man, in a servitor's garb,



bearing on his left shoulder a moderately sized round basket, out of which spring the vaulting ribs, fifteen or twenty, perhaps, of the roof that closes in the tower-like

stair. The foliation in these ribs, seen at the distance of about five steps below the pedestal on which the figure rests, resembles wheat ears; and the *tout ensemble* thus presented to the eye would lead any one to conceive that the basket was stuffed with a wheatsheaf; some stems and ears bending downward, and some rearing upwards, as is seen in any bundle of corn when set up erect. The composition is very ingenious, and, as I believe, unique in its kind.

It was not easy to ascertain without ascending to the level on which this Gothic Caryatid stood, and then taking an accurate survey of the foliations,—all of which were mutilated, and thus eluded speedier recognition,—what really were the curves issuing so freely out of the little panier. I succeeded, however, in discovering that each rib is richly adorned with semi-lunar-shaped crockets.

The effect is admirable; the whole weight of the groined roof resting apparently on the little man's shoulder; but all information relative to the origin or reference that this "merrie conceite" may have borne, when first introduced to notice, has long since been lost in the night of ages.

There are several other curious relics of the architectural genius of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. There seemed to be something to attract and amuse in all directions; and Dijon has no common-place aspect on any side. Stroll in whatever direction the fancy of the moment may lead, there is always something to stimulate curiosity; and it is not difficult to perceive that in by-gone times there must have been numerous families of wealth and high distinction resident in the principal quarters of the town, and maintaining, in their palatial homes, a style approaching to

magnificence. The Ducal Court would, doubtless, be surrounded by the optimates of the land, nobles of old creation whose ancestors had obtained their rank from chivalric heroism, or patriotic services rendered to Burgundy in her councils or her battles; to whose number would be added the owners of title and influence derivable from offices, civil or military, held under the immediate favour and countenance of the reigning Duke, whose state was maintained on a scale of splendour unknown to the sovereigns of the present day.

The court of Charles the Rash was the most brilliant in Europe; and the government of John the Fearless, Charles, and Philip, (the latter being the founder of the great palace still in existence), fostering the cause of civilization, commercial industry, and learning, is, to this hour, the subject of honourable remembrance and mention to, at least, the extent of respect paid in Venice to the memory of her Doges.

There are professors of various faculties, men of established repute, and many eminent literary characters now resident in this town, where the consolidating effects of a long peace, and the benign influence of thriving trade, have long secured tranquillity to their studies, and encouragement to their scientific pursuits; especially now that commercial activity has altogether superseded the turmoil and distraction of war.

Business was brisk enough, I was told, and on the increase: the abridgment of distances and the vast improvement of the means of locomotion having proved peculiarly beneficial to a population for whom this large Wine Mart finds employment throughout the year, and to whose

houses the grape, fermenting industry among all classes of the inhabitants, seems to bring profit and sure competency.

Among minor productions we might venture to make mention of Dijon's *mustard*, which has been held in high renown for upwards of three centuries ; as seemed to me on very insufficient grounds. Neither can more be said in favour of its spiced gingerbread, which is the noted rival of that manufactured at Rheims ; but the natives expatiate on the excellence of both.

The town seems fully capable of ministering with many a dainty *meat* to luxurious taste ; but Nature has been lavish in her distribution of the finest *drink* in the universe, around their very walls ; and in limiting one's mention to such testimony we leave them alone in their glory.

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